

JANUARY 14, 1995
COLUMN
it crashes into
Buckingham
place
London

NDON (R) — A British
car crashed into the
gates of Queen Elizabeth
in London Friday
causing the gates to
collapse. The car was
driven by a woman who
was killed. The car was
driven into the gates at
about 40 km/h. There
were no other injuries.

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New York's
olic places

YORK (AFP) —
Police in New York
have banned smoking
in public places. The
ban will take effect
on January 15. The
ban covers all public
places, including
restaurants, bars, and
public transport.

artists fill
galactic void

ON, Arizona (AP) —
A group of artists
have filled a large
void in the sky with
their own creations.
The void was created
by a group of artists
who used a special
technique to create
the void. The void was
filled with a variety of
artistic creations, including
paintings, sculptures, and
other works of art.

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Gunmen slay 6 Algerian FLN members

TUNIS (R) — Gunmen have shot dead six members of Algeria's legal opposition National Liberation Front (FLN) party, whose leader is under fire from the government for joining peace talks abroad with outlawed Islamists. The official Algerian news agency said on Saturday that the six men, aged between 43 and 61, were killed on Thursday in the village of Lahlef, Relizane province, some 255 kilometres southwest of Algiers. APS quoted a security force statement which blamed the killings on "armed terrorists," the official term for anti-regime guerrillas. The FLN is among eight main opposition groups, including the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which signed a joint proposal in Rome on Friday aimed at ending their country's civil strife (see page 12).

King, Saleh review Arab relations

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein telephoned Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh on Saturday and discussed with him bilateral relations, the Jordan New Agency, Petra, said. The King and Mr. Saleh stressed the need to end disputes among Arab countries and to unify the ranks of the Arab Nation to enable it to counter challenges facing it, the agency said.

Palestinians, Saudis agree on pilgrims

JERUSALEM (R) — Palestinian and Saudi officials have agreed to double the number of Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank who may make the pilgrimage to Mecca each year, a Palestinian official said on Saturday. "The Saudi authorities accepted our request to allow 15,000 Palestinian pilgrims to visit Mecca this year," said Nabil Shaath. This year's pilgrimage will be in early May. Hassan Tahboub, the Palestinian official in charge of religious affairs, recently visited Saudi Arabia to discuss the matter. Dr. Shaath said the Saudis would offer logistical facilities to the Palestinian pilgrims and Egypt would allow them to use the El-Arish airport.

Communists win Uzbek elections

TASHKENT (AFP) — Uzbekistan's communists won a crushing overall victory in the second round of general elections and will hold at least 231 of the new parliament's 250 seats, the daily People's Word said Saturday. The state-controlled daily said 243 seats have been allocated following the Dec. 25 and Jan. 8 elections. The remaining seven seats will be decided in a delayed poll on Jan. 22, because voter turnout fell short of the minimum 50 per cent in these constituencies. The electoral commission said 88.3 per cent of eligible voters took part in the second round against 93.6 per cent in the first round. The new parliament, or Oli Majlis, will comprise 250 deputies, half as many as the old Supreme Soviet. The communist Popular Democratic Party (PPD), with its 231 seats, will face only token opposition from the Party of National Progress (PNP) which won 12 seats.

Syria builds first quake centre

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria, located in an active earthquake area, on Saturday opened its first earthquake monitoring centre. The \$1.8 million project will provide data on seismic activities through 20 ground stations spread around Syria. The project is financed by the Kuwait-based Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development. Seven of the ground stations have already been built and the rest will be completed by the end of this year, officials said. The centre's chief, Hassan Abu Rumeih, told Reuters the facility, which began test operations in December, recorded a major earthquake in northeast Syria measuring 4.7 on the Richter scale on Dec. 18. No damages or injuries were caused.

14 rebels killed in Turkey

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkish forces have killed 14 Kurdish rebels and lost two of their own men in operations in the southeast of the country, the Anatolia news agency reported Saturday. Eight of the rebels, belonging to the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), were killed in the Diyarbakir region, the others in the Hakkari and Mardin sectors, the agency said, quoting a statement from Diyarbakir prefecture. On Friday a Turkish police helicopter crashed for unknown reasons.

S. Arabia said massing troops on Yemen border

SANAA (Agencies) — Saudi Arabia has massed forces near the border with Yemen, including warplanes and missile launchers, Arab diplomats here said Saturday. Meanwhile, a high-level Syrian delegation visiting Riyadh tried to mediate between the two neighbours whose forces have clashed on the disputed border several times since the May-July 1994 Yemeni civil war.

The Saudi military buildup, started earlier in the week, was focussed on the Saada and Mahara provinces on Yemen's northern border, said the diplomats, quoted by the French news agency AFP.

In Riyadh, Arab diplomats also said the situation on the border was "very tense" Saturday. They said a Syrian delegation led by Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam, which travelled to the Saudi kingdom after visiting Sanaa, was mediating "to defuse the tension."

One diplomat, who asked not to be named, said Saudi Arabia "is still sending troops, heavy weapons, including missile launchers and F-16 warplanes, close to Al Buq region in Saada province

and Mahara province to the west."

The sources did not give details of Yemen's military forces in the area.

Sanaa has deployed several units on the border in recent months as part of an army reorganisation.

Mr. Khaddam, accompanied by Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa, discussed the situation in the region Saturday with Saudi Defence Minister Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz.

The Syrian officials Friday handed King Fahd a message from President Hafez Al Assad.

Earlier they gave Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh a similar message, which dealt with efforts to improve Arab relations and "restore solidarity," the official Yemeni news agency SABA said.

Mr. Saleh spoke to King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak by telephone Saturday, SABA reported.

They discussed Arab relations, the Middle East peace process, and "efforts made to achieve inter-Arab reconciliation and greater Arab solidarity."

Officials from both coun-

tries said Friday a high-level Yemeni delegation would go ahead with a visit to Saudi Arabia called off earlier in the week after a clash on the border.

They said the visit, originally set for Wednesday, would instead take place Saturday.

Yemen's Parliamentary Speaker Sheikh Abdullah Al Ahmar was to lead the delegation, which would include Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Iryani and Planning Minister Abdul Kader Bajamal.

The delegation is to meet King Fahd with the goal of paving the way for a trip to the kingdom by Mr. Saleh, according to officials in Sanaa.

But the plans were disrupted by the border incident on Tuesday.

The president and King Fahd discussed steps taken to contain the incident during a telephone conversation later the same day, according to SABA.

Officials in Sanaa said Saudi-armed Yemeni tribesmen occupied a border post in the northeast of the country and hoisted the Saudi flag.

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Chechens hold onto palace in face of Russian assault

GROZNY (Agencies) — Chechen fighters doggedly held on to the presidential palace here late Saturday in the face of a fierce assault by Russian forces.

Russian television station NTV quoted its Grozny correspondent as saying the compound of the palace, symbol of the Chechens' drive for independence, had itself at one stage been the scene of clashes with Russian soldiers fighting Chechen defenders inside the building.

Chechen fighters said Russian forces had tried to surround the parliament building opposite the palace.

"The Russians briefly managed to take the building backed by armoured vehicles, but we retook control and we currently hold 25 Russian prisoners in the basement," said Hamzat Garmaghiyev, commander of a battalion of special Chechen forces.

He said clashes around the palace had largely tailed off Saturday evening, but were continuing elsewhere, notably around the central market square and the Cosmos cinema, some 300 metres away.

The commander added that the Russians still held no key building in Grozny.

Three Russian deputies from the reformist Democratic Choice party meanwhile denounced the Chechenya intervention as a "war crime without precedent," and de-

manded that those responsible be "severely punished," Interfax reported.

"Russian democracy is too weak to oppose the military," Mikhail Molotov said on returning from the region.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin has made a tragic mistake in the conflict with Chechenya and is paying a hefty price, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said.

"I think they're suffering very considerably in world opinion. I believe that what they've done has set back their progress toward democracy," Mr. Christopher said in a CNN television interview.

Mr. Christopher is travelling to Geneva on Monday for a meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and the crisis in Chechenya will top the agenda.

He said he would tell his Russian counterpart that the "indiscriminate killing of women and children, the excessive use of force are all things that are of great concern to the world community."

Mr. Christopher said he had spoken with Mr. Kozyrev by telephone earlier in the week and that he admitted that the violence in Chechenya was "an awful situation, a tragic situation," and he indicated he was looking for a way out.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has told President

Yeltsin he "understood" Russia's difficulties in restoring Moscow's rule in Chechenya during a sympathetic phone call, the Kremlin said.

The chancellor declared his understanding of the situation's difficulties, Mr. Yeltsin's spokesman Vyacheslav Kostikov said.

Mr. Kostikov accused NTV television of misrepresenting Friday's telephone conversation by saying Mr. Kohl had criticised Mr. Yeltsin's handling of the Chechen crisis.

"This does not correspond with reality," Mr. Kostikov said.

Confirming this view of events, the German weekly Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung said that in an interview to be published Sunday that Mr. Kohl gave Mr. Yeltsin his full support.

The U.S. administration has been more outspoken in its condemnation of the bloodshed in Chechenya over the last few days after having little to say in the opening days of the conflict late last year.

President Bill Clinton Friday issued the strongest objections to date concerning Chechenya when he spoke in Cleveland, Ohio.

While repeating his stance that is part of the Russian Federation and that he supported the territorial integrity

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AMMAN SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 1995, SHAABAN 14, 1415



King, Mubarak discuss relations

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Saturday exchanged views on bilateral relations and issues to be discussed at an expected meeting between the two leaders on Feb. 1.

In a telephone conversation, King Hussein and Mr. Mubarak stressed the need to overcome disputes among Arab countries and to take unified stands on issues facing the Arab Nation, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

Mr. Mubarak is expected to visit Jordan on Feb. 1, his first trip to the Kingdom since ties were strained during the 1990 Gulf crisis, Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti said Friday.

The trip was agreed a day earlier in talks between Mr. Mubarak and Mr. Kabariti. King Hussein has visited Cairo twice since the crisis.

Jordan and Egypt also agreed on Saturday to hold a meeting of the joint Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee in the first half of March.

Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and his Egyptian counterpart Atef Sedki agreed to convene the meet-

ing in a telephone contact made by Mr. Sedki to congratulate Sharif Zeid on assuming his post as prime minister.

The two discussed Jordanian-Egyptian relations and means of enhancing them, Petra said.

Congratulations

Sharif Zeid also received two cables from the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifah Bin Hamad Al Thani, and Qatari Crown Prince Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifah Al Thani congratulating him on forming his new government.

The Qatari Emir and Crown Prince wished Sharif Zeid luck in carrying out his duties.

They also wished the Jordanian people further progress and prosperity under the leadership of King Hussein.

Sharif Zeid also received a cable from Bangladeshi Prime Minister Khafizur Rahman Zia congratulating him on forming his new government. Ms. Zia wished Sharif Zeid good luck and the Jordanian people further progress and prosperity under the leadership of King Hussein.

PNA demands settlement freeze

GAZA (Agencies) — The Palestinian National Authority in self-rule Gaza on Saturday called for an immediate halt to the expansion of Jewish settlements in Gaza and the West Bank, authority members said.

Ahmad Qouriea, in charge of economics in the authority, said settlements were the top priority at the weekly cabinet meeting.

"This activity was at the top of our agenda today. It is illegal, it is an obstacle, it should be frozen completely. There should be no settlement activities until we reach the final status."

The agreement allowed some 4,000 settlers in Gaza and over 120,000 in the West Bank to remain in place under Israeli protection.

The issue was to be left for a later stage of negotiations but recent attempts to expand the settlements have angered Palestinians who

have demanded the controversial matter be addressed immediately.

Nabil Shaath, a senior authority member, said that at the final stage of the peace agreement all Israeli settlements should be removed from the Gaza Strip.

A leading member of the Hamas group on Saturday called on Palestinians to resist Jewish settlement in Gaza and the West Bank by sabotage as well as armed struggle.

Mahmoud Al Zahhar told a seminar at Gaza's Islamic University to close roads leading to settlements, cut electricity lines, ban Palestinian labourers from working in settlements and demonstrate at the entrances of settlements daily.

Former Palestinian negotiator Haidar Abdul Sahfi, an independent, speaking at the Gaza gathering, accused Israel of supporting the settlement activity.

"The Israeli government is supporting settlers' efforts to establish a Jewish state in the whole land of Palestine," he said.

Hamas bitterly opposes the PLO-Israeli deal and supports armed attacks on Israeli targets. Dr. Shaath rejected Dr. Zahhar's call for sabotage, telling reporters: "We have committed ourselves to peaceful methods of facing all our problems."

Also on Saturday, armed Jewish settlers clashed with Palestinians in the West Bank town of Hebron, Palestinians and the Israeli army said.

Both sources said the settlers, led by Rabbi Moshe Levinger, provoked the clash by throwing stones at Palestinians in the town centre. An army spokeswoman said soldiers fired shots to disperse them.

Palestinians said one man was wounded by a rubber bullet and three by stones.

The army said it had no report of casualties.

Near Hebron, Palestinians threw stones at bulldozers paving a road for a Jewish settlement. At the West Bank village of Deir Qaddis, Palestinian farmers planted olive trees in a symbolic claim to a piece of land near the neighbouring Jewish settlement of Matityahu.

Israeli settlers on the West Bank said Saturday they now number more than 140,000, an increase of five per cent since the September 1993 autonomy deal with the Palestinians.

Israel Radio said the settlers used local tax returns to establish their number 141,000 people.

The settlers had previously kept silent on the five per cent increase since the autonomy deal so as to prevent the government from halting colonisation as part of measures to advance the peace process.

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Palestinian Movement for Democracy takes shape

By Lamin K. Andoni
Special to the Jordan Times

A GROUP of Palestinians, led by Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi, is seeking to form a new movement that would help lead the Palestinian people out of the current political crisis which is largely the result of disillusionment with the limited self-rule agreement signed on Sept. 13, 1993.

The new movement does not present itself as an alternative to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Rather it seeks to reunify Palestinian ranks around such crucial issues as rejection of any solution short of an independent Palestinian state and democratic Palestinian institutions.

A draft proposal presented by Dr. Abdul Shafi, the former head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations, refers to a broad-based popular movement that aims at attaining peace on the basis of a two-state solution — Israel and a Palestinian state — and the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes.

The proposal, which is being debated by Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories and the diaspora, calls for the formation of a "movement for building democracy in the Palestinian community."

It contains no reference at all to the Oslo self-rule agreements, but considers the Palestinian initiative of 1988 that called

for a two-state solution as the basis for a peaceful solution to the Palestinian problem.

According to Palestinian sources, membership in the new Movement for Democracy is open to individuals from all political trends and is not based on a coalition among the existing Palestinian factions.

Advocates of the new movement present it as the third alternative, the first being to the political line represented by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and the second by Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement.

But undermining Hamas is not one of the movement's aims, and members of Hamas and the Palestinian Authority can in principle join the movement if



Haidar Abdul Shafi

they accept and adhere to its declared objectives.

"Many Palestinians do

not support the PNA although they are either secular or believe in a negotiated settlement with Israel based on the implementation of United Nations resolutions," explained one Palestinian source.

Dr. Abdul Shafi decided to initiate the movement after contacts he made with many Palestinian personalities and groups during a visit to Amman last month.

The widely respected leader then formulated a three-page draft proposal that was sent out to many Palestinians in the occupied territories and abroad on Jan. 5.

A reading of the draft proposal indicates that it is still a very general broad-line document that does

not take a clear position on the PNA and the Oslo agreement. It also falls short of outlining a strategy or plan of action for the Palestinians to pursue from now on.

During his short visit to Amman, Dr. Abdul Shafi told the Jordan Times he believed that specific goals and a strategy could only be formulated after wide consultations.

He said that his contacts and discussions had revealed wide differences on the shape and the goals of the movement. While some are seeking a clear-cut opposition that calls for the removal of the self-rule authority, others are seeking a democratic mass movement whose goals develop gradually.

The draft formulated by Dr. Abdul Shafi does not exclude any option regarding the direction that the movement could take.

Thus it could prove to be an alternative to the current leadership, represented by the Palestinian Authority, or it could represent a broad-based opposition movement.

The call for a new movement was a direct result of the lack of progress on negotiations to implement the second phase of the self-rule agreement involving a redeployment of Israeli troops in the occupied West Bank and Palestinian elections.

Palestinian anger over the expansion of Israeli settlements and the lack of progress on negotiations to implement the second phase of the self-rule agreement involving a redeployment of Israeli troops in the occupied West Bank and Palestinian elections.

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Delegation from U.N. Gulf crisis compensation committee arrives

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A delegation representing a U.N. committee handling compensation applications from direct and indirect victims of the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait arrived here today (Sunday) to discuss the status of claims from Jordanians to the panel.

The delegation, headed by Michael Raboin, assistant secretary-general of the commission, visits Jordan in response to an invitation by the government of Jordan and will hold talks with senior Jordanian officials and others dealing with the applications for compensation.

The main problem impeding the completion of the committee's work is the lack of funds. The committee's work is limited to evaluating applications and forwarding its findings and recommendations to a governing council, which has the final say in approving and releasing payments from a special U.N. fund set up after the Gulf war.

Figures have varied between \$28 million and \$40 million as the amount available to the fund after several governments transferred part or full value of Iraqi funds held with them as called for by the U.N. Security Council.

Thirty per cent of proceeds from all Iraqi oil exports will be transferred to the fund as and when Iraq resumes its oil sales after the international sanctions on that country are lifted/eased.

The total amount of compensation sought by individuals, companies and gov-

ernments which suffered direct or indirect losses as a result of the invasion of Kuwait and the ensuing crisis runs to tens of billions of dollars.

Yahya Utaibi, secretary-general of the Amman-based Returnees Compensation Committee which handles Jordanian applications to the fund, said 110,000 claims were filed by Jordanians under the various categories as stipulated by the Geneva-based committee on the basis of death and injuries, personal losses, loss of property, loss of contracts etc.

The minimum amount of compensation payable to an approved claim is \$2,500.

The compensation committee paid \$982,000 in mid-1994 to 241 Jordanian applicants whose claims were based on death and injuries under category "B".

According to a copy of the recommendations and decisions of the committee made available to the Jordan Times, the panel studied 503 claims from Jordan in the first phase of its considerations. The committee said 232 of the claims were not eligible for payments, transferred six to other categories and classified 24 claims as "miscellaneous claims."

Two hundred and eighteen Jordanian claims studied were related to death and 285 to serious personal injury.

Category "B" applications filed from Jordan totalled nearly 700, but officials say that some of them did not qualify to be in that category.

In its mid-1994 recommendations and decisions, the committee studied a total of 1,119 claims and recom-

mended \$2,747,500 in payment.

The highest number of successful claimants were from Kuwait (303), and they were paid \$1,397,500. Jordan came second (241 claims — \$982,000), followed by the United Kingdom (39 claims — \$107,500), Sri Lanka (34 claims — \$110,000), France (21 claims — \$52,500), the U.S. (11 claims — \$35,000), Pakistan (seven claims — \$22,500), Poland and Thailand (four claims each: \$10,000), China (two claims — \$5,000), and Australia, the Slovak Republic, Iran, Kenya, Mauritius and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (one claim each — \$2,500).

Mr. Utaibi said Saturday it was not known when the commission would study the rest of the cases and when claimants could expect payment or a ruling on their applications.

"We are closely following up with the committee, and we are sure that all claims will be studied and payments will be made at some point," said Mr. Utaibi. "But we don't know when the work would be finished and when the governing council would make a decision."

The Security Council resolution ordering compensation for Gulf crisis victims "is not negotiable," and, as such, the claims will have to be settled sooner or later, he noted.

According to Mr. Utaibi, the very fact that the Jordanian government had invited the delegation arriving here today was a strong indication of Jordan's determination to press the case of its claimants.

Mr. Utaibi told Reuters the team will hold talks with top government officials on technical aspects related to Jordan's total claims of \$8 billion submitted before a U.N. deadline for submission of individual and governmental applications at the end of 1994.

Over \$4 billion of Jordan's \$8 billion compensation claims are filed by individuals for personal losses and Jordanians who owned enterprises in Kuwait, he said.

The Jordanian government claims an estimated \$4 billion in national losses from the influx of its citizens who strained its economy and infrastructure.

Jordan was also expected to seek compensation from the U.N. for the losses it incurred as a result of higher freight costs and shipping charges brought about by the four-year enforcement of the international sanctions against Iraq by U.S.-led warships in the Red Sea. The Kingdom is also expected to demand compensation for fees it is paying to the Lloyd's Register, which maintains a presence at Aqaba to observe all incoming and outgoing cargo.

The delegation will hold talks with the ministers of interior, foreign affairs and labour. The minister of labour is also president of the Returnees Compensation Committee.

The discussions would be technical in nature, and a local report said the committee in Geneva was having some problems with computer diskettes provided by the Jordanian panel containing the details of applicants and claims.

Egypt's militants make comeback in New Year

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's Muslim militants, hit hard last year by arrests and executions, have made a vigorous revival in the New Year, belying the government's repeated boast that it has broken the back of the movement.

Guns were thought to be militants struck another blow at the tourist industry on Thursday evening when they opened fire on a train from the southern resort town of Luxor, wounding two Argentine tourists and four Egyptians. It was the first attack on a tourist train since March last year.

And on Jan. 2, in four operations which showed unusual bravado and coordination, militants disguised as police dragged policemen off buses and summarily executed them in public.

The militant Gamaa Al Islamiyah (Islamic Group), the main organisation trying to overthrow the government, ended three months of silence to claim responsibility for the killings.

A Gamaa statement restated its aims as "confronting the regime... and defending religion and liberties until our people in Egypt enjoy the freedom they want under Islam."

In the first 12 days of the year, 29 people have been killed in political violence, compared with an average of about four a week since the Gamaa began attacking in March 1992.

A new element is the frequency with which the militants kill civilians they suspect are police informers — at least three of these have been gunned down in the past week.

The conflict has now spread along most of the Nile valley between Minya province to the north and Giza province to the south — a stretch of about 350 kilometres.

An outpost near Cairo came to light Jan. 8 when police shot dead five suspected militants in a satellite town.

But the undisputed centre is the area around the town of Mallawi, where a permanent night curfew is in force and people think twice before stepping abroad even in broad daylight.

Heavily armed police units go out on search-and-destroy missions through the sugarcane fields where the militants hide and rarely take prisoners if the militants open fire at them.

The militants train in the desert beyond the narrow strip of irrigated land, ambush and kill sole policemen, steal their weapons and usually escape back to their hideouts.

Most embassies advise their citizens to confine their visits to southern Egypt to the towns of Luxor and Aswan, so far immune from the sporadic attacks on tourists.

Official statistics suggest that the decline in the tourist industry has now levelled off and there is anecdotal evidence that violence at the current level has lost its novelty value and some of its effect as a deterrent to tourism.

In the first 11 months of last year 2,381 million people visited Egypt, compared with 2,335 million in the same period of the previous year. But tourist revenue in the first 10 months fell to \$1.23

billion, from \$1.229 billion between January and Oct. 1993, the prime minister's office said.

The revenue is at least \$1 billion less than the country could earn from tourism if it was at peace, economists say.

The government continues to reject any political solution to end what it calls terrorism but in recent months it has put less emphasis on alleged foreign aid for the Gamaa and more on the domestic roots of the thinking behind violent fundamentalism.

"The terrorists have their roots at the bottom of society," Education Minister Hussein Bahaddeen, a vigorous campaigner, told a seminar of intellectuals in December. "We have managed to check the spread of terrorism and throw off the cloak of Islam beneath which they hide... but we are chipping at the tip of the iceberg, most of which is hidden under the water," he added.

Muslim fundamentalists, some of them sympathetic to acts of violence, are widespread in Egypt society. They include many teachers, lawyers, doctors and other influential professionals.

The government's response, often echoed by pillars of the clerical establishment, has been to try to project a different vision of what it says is true Islam — flexible, tolerant, progressive and cosmopolitan.

But it is one man's word against another and does not wash among the angry young men who see Islam as a radical panacea for ills such as corruption, hypocrisy, poverty and slights to national and Islamic pride.

The government has also failed to strike up an effective alliance with natural friends such as liberals, leftists and democrats, many of whom say the authorities have made too many concessions to the hardline Islamic establishment.

5 killed

Crack security forces shot dead four Islamic militants during a raid on their hideout in the troubled Minya region of southern Egypt Saturday while another group of militants killed a police officer, authorities said.

Special Interior Ministry police first surrounded a Coptic Christian cemetery in Bani Mazar, around 180 kilometres south of Cairo, where militants of Gamaa were hiding.

Four militants fled and police gave chase, killing three of them in a gunbattle in the streets. A 65-year-old man was also shot and wounded in the clash.

The fourth militant was shot dead later in another part of the town, police said. Nine bombs and three pistols were found, along with documents linking the militants to the Gamaa.

One of the dead was identified as a 22-year-old student from the University of Minya.

Islamic militants meanwhile shot dead a 45-year-old policeman, Faraghi Mehanni, in front of his family in the village of Qaliba near the militant stronghold of Mallawi, 300 kilometres south of Cairo.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Western Sahara vote set for October

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — The U.N. Security Council said Friday that it would no longer delay a Western Sahara vote on self-determination and would hold it in October with a transition period beginning on June 1. The referendum has been delayed several times because of difficulties in identifying eligible voters in the Western Sahara, where Morocco and the Polisario Front have been battling for control of the territory. The area was a Spanish colony until 1975. Western diplomats have said that the Western Sahara issue could move forward this year since it is in the interests of both sides to hold the referendum. If Polisario loses, a statute granting autonomy could still be negotiated later, they said. The 15-member council also voted to extend until May 31 the mandate of the 334-member mission in the Western Sahara. U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali has recommended that 105 police and at least 51 officials be added to the mission. Observers from the Organisation of African Unity are expected to help the process of identifying eligible voters.

Lebanese police seize Liberal books

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanese police have confiscated three books by the late liberal Islamist writer Al Sadeq Al Naheymou because Muslim authorities considered them harmful to Islam, a police spokeswoman said on Saturday. The books were seized on Friday at the request of the office of Lebanon's Sunni Muslim mufti Mohammad Rashid Kabbani, under a law allowing heads of Lebanon's religious groups to order confiscation of books they consider offensive to their beliefs. The three books, which have been on sale throughout the Arab World for several years, are "Voice of the People, Drama of a falsified Culture," "Islam imprisoned" and "Islam Against Islam," which broke sales records last month at an annual Arab book fair at the Information Ministry in Beirut. Mr. Naheymou's writings call for reconsideration of traditional Islamic theories in the light of modern intellectual developments and adapting Islam to the needs of the 21st century. Mr. Naheymou, who was of Libyan origin, died two months ago in Geneva. His publishers said his books have never previously been confiscated in the Arab World and are currently on sale at the Cairo international book fair.

Moroccan satirist says his plays banned

RABAT (R) — One of Morocco's best known entertainers said on Friday the authorities have banned him from showing his satirical plays in the country without giving a reason. "The authorities have decided to ban my pieces in all the cities of the kingdom and withhold permission for the staging of my plays," Ahmad Senoussi, who is known as Bazz, told Reuters. The popular actor recently said the authorities had banned the showing of his play "The Vice and the Suitcase" in the towns of Fez and Marrakesh. He says the play has now been banned in Casablanca. The play mocked the government's human rights record and corruption of the arts and media. Mr. Senoussi is also a human rights activist. "By banning my plays, they are depriving the Moroccan people of the right to laughter and enjoyment. I think this is very serious because it means we no longer have the right to be satirical in this country," Mr. Senoussi said. An official at the Ministry of Human Rights said the authorities were aware of the ban on Mr. Senoussi. "We are examining the case but unfortunately it is up to the regional police which authorities to decide on such matters," the official said. Mr. Senoussi has been banned from appearing on Moroccan television for years.

Iran cleric says satellite ban certain

TEHRAN (R) — A member of a powerful Islamic clerical council that reviews laws passed by Iran's parliament said on Friday the council had backed a parliament bill outlawing satellite dishes, leaving only a funding hitch to be solved. "Parliament took the justified step to ban the use of satellite dishes, and the Guardian Council has approved the bill," said a spokesman for the Islamic Consultative Assembly. The bill is a response to a complaint by the Islamic Consultative Assembly that satellite dishes are a threat to national security. The bill would require satellite dish owners to have one month to turn in their equipment, after the bill receives final approval from the Guardian Council or face fines of up to three million rials (\$1000 at the open market exchange rate).

Israel Military Industries head quits

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel Military Industries (IMI) Director-General Gadi Komissar has resigned from his post after four years over differences with the board of directors on restructuring IMI, his spokesman said on Friday. Israel Radio said Mr. Komissar was opposed to restructuring IMI, converted from an arm of the Defense Ministry into a state company in 1990, into a holding company with subsidiaries. "The directors want subsidiaries. He wanted divisions. That was not accepted," said spokesman Avihai Ben-Yaacov. News of the resignation came on Friday evening, and government officials were not immediately available to comment. The radio said Mr. Komissar warned restructuring plans now afoot would not contribute to and could damage IMI. Mr. Komissar declined to elaborate further on the resignation. He said a formal statement would be issued on Sunday. The resignation was made on Friday afternoon. IMI's work force to 5,620 in 1993 from 7,228 in 1992, compared with 11,150 employed in 1990. Last summer there were reports it would lay off 1,200 of its work force because of a drop in sales.

Palestinians satisfied with talks on Mideast bank

WASHINGTON (USIA) — A Palestinian participant expressed his delegation's satisfaction on Tuesday with the results of the just-concluded talks here on establishing a Middle East Development Bank, one of the noteworthy recommendations of the Middle East/North Africa Economic Summit held in Casablanca last October.

Hassan Abdul Rahman, chief representative for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Washington and a member of the Palestine Authority's delegation to the talks, said the proposed bank "will facilitate in the future the financing of national and regional infrastructures and thereby firmly establish the (Mideast) peace process."

Mr. Abdul Rahman spoke as delegates from the 39 participating countries and international organisations were heading home after agreeing on the formation of a task force to come up with "detailed proposals" for the proposed bank.

The task force will be considering such matters as the bank's "mandate, membership, eligibility for borrowing, relationship to other institutions, operational functions, capital requirements, governance, and interim arrangements," according to a three-page statement spelling out the "summary conclusions" presented by U.S. Undersecretary of State for Economic Affairs Joan E. Spero, who co-chaired the two-day meeting at the State Department here.

The PLO joined Egypt, Israel and Jordan in producing "a paper outlining their vision" of the bank and "a number of regional and non-regional delegations" supported the proposal, the statement said.

Ms. Spero explained at the briefing: "I am not pretending to say that there has been a decision to sign on the dotted line for a bank. But I would say that the difference of opinion narrowed quite significantly. This was in reference to

some Arab, reportedly Saudi Arabian, reluctance to endorse the bank outright, although Spero emphasised that "all parties were open to consideration of a bank."

She went on to cite two reasons for this turnaround: "One is, and I think most overwhelmingly important, the statement and the position of the four countries (PLO, Israel, Egypt and Jordan). Not only did they present a common paper, not only did they present a common view, but they forcefully argued and jointly argued and jointly negotiated — to the extent there was a negotiation — their position. They argued very strongly to say, 'You told us to get together. You told us to develop as an economic region. You told us you wanted these things. Now we are coming to you and telling you what our proposal is, and we ask you to respond.'"

The second reason, she added, is that several of the participants in the Casablanca conference have examined "the sort of options and the needs" after their meeting in Morocco and many concluded that "if what you want is new funding that 'if what you want is new funding capacity, promotion of regional development, the existing mechanisms don't get you there..."

Nevertheless, she continued, the bank remains "a very strong option" because the idea emanates from the region.

The task force will be meeting monthly, beginning March 5 in Washington, to come up with the proposals for endorsement by the second economic summit conference scheduled to be held in Jordan in October.

Another complementary proposal to be looked into by the task force is "a forum for regional cooperation" which came primarily from some European countries although Ms. Spero added, they "remain very open to examination and consideration of the idea."

The veteran politician who has declared he would not run for a third five-year term when his tenure at the presidency runs out in April, said he would take his final decision by the end of this month.

Denktash to give his view on peace to U.S. envoy

NICOSIA (R) — Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş said on Friday he was anticipating talks with President Bill Clinton's special emissary, expected to visit the divided island this month.

Mr. Denktaş at the same time gave a warning of a Greek-Turkey war if Greek Cypriots went into the European Union (EU) before a resolution of the problem that has divided Cyprus since 1974.

If Greek Cypriots integrated with the EU Turkish Cypriots would do the same with Turkey, Mr. Denktaş told Reuters.

"The encouraged Greek side... will react violently and may attack us. This will drag Turkey as a matter of honour and obligation... into an armed conflict which may eventually bring the involvement of Greece, hence a Greco-Turkish war."

New York attorney Richard Beattie is expected in Cyprus on Jan. 22 as Mr. Clinton's special envoy.

"I myself welcome the arrival of President Clinton's special emissary who is projected as one of the best legal brains in the United States," said Mr. Denktaş.

"If Mr. Beattie is coming

with an open heart and open mind... I hope he will report to the president that 31 years have been missed by this great power (USA) and great injustice and discrimination has been done to Turkish Cypriots."

"So far American involvement, because of the Greek lobby and the noise it makes in the USA has encouraged Greek Cypriots to intransigence and has not been helpful," Mr. Denktaş said.

Mr. Denktaş leads a breakaway republic in the north, declared unilaterally in 1983 and recognised by Ankara alone.

Cyprus has been divided since 1974 when Turkish troops invaded the north in reaction to a coup in Nicosia by advocates of union with Greece.

Turkish Cypriots date the problem to 1963 when a joint republic formed in 1960 under Turkish, Greek and British guarantees collapsed in intercommunal violence.

The veteran politician who has declared he would not run for a third five-year term when his tenure at the presidency runs out in April, said he would take his final decision by the end of this month.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:00 Coonies Minutes
17:30 Que Le Mielles Oagne
18:00 Montagne
18:30 Le Monde Fantastique Des Enfants
19:00 News In French
19:15 Ushuaia
19:30 Galactica
20:15 The Album Show
21:00 The Nanny
21:30 Heartbeat
22:00 News In English
22:30 Feature film: "Turner and Hooch"
23:59 The Hidden Room

PRAYER TIMES

05:10 Fair
06:32 (Sunrise) Doha
11:44 Dhahar
14:33 'Asr
16:57 Maghrib
18:18 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish Tel: 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel: 632785.

St. Joseph Church Tel: 624590.
Church of the Assumption Tel: 637440.
De la Saile Church Tel: 661757.
Ternassia Church Tel: 622566.
Church of the Assumption Tel: 623541.
Anglican Church Tel: 630851, Tel: 628543.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel: 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel: 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel: 771751.
Armenian International Church Tel: 652526.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel: 624528.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel: 684195.
The Latter-Day Saints Tel: 654932.
Church of Nazareth Tel: 675991.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel: 811295.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures will rise further with winds southeasterly light becoming southeasterly moderate later. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.
Min./Max. temp
Amman 7/18

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Agaba 10-25
Deserts 3-20
Jordan Valley 10-24

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 19, Agaba 23, Humidity readings: Amman 39 per cent, Agaba 47 per cent.

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Fakhri Taweh 958800
Dr. Nidal Al Dahleh 271945
Dr. Salim Al Dahboubi 776751
Dr. Basam Karadseh 729200
First pharmacy 641912
Ferdous pharmacy 783334
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nainouk pharmacy 625672
Al Salam pharmacy 626700
Yaacoub pharmacy 645045
Smeisam pharmacy 657940
Nainouk pharmacy 626702
Najib pharmacy 347632

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Fire Brigade 75121
Blood Bank 643402
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 843402
Police Security Department 640321
Hotel Complaints 665800
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Regents 623101
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Regens 623101
Abdala Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 771111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

ZARQA:

Dr. Fawaz Hamdallah 903644
Khalid pharmacy 958417

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 644251/6
Azileh Maternity, J. Amn 642412/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642632
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsiya 664171/4
Shamsiya Hospital 669121
Al-Musabir Hospital 845845
The Islamic, Abdal 661272/7
Al-Ahli, Abdal 661646/6
Italian, Al-Musabir 771013/3
Al-Basir, J. Ashrafieh 771013/3
Army, Marika 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 662240/50
Amal Hospital 674135

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983325
Al-Hussein Hospital 09986772
Zarqa National Hospital 09980560
Ibn Sina Hospital 09986772
Al-Hussein Hospital 09980560
Princess Basma Hospital 09983325

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:35 Bangkok (RJ)
07:45 Agaba (RJ)
08:25 Jeddah (RJ)
09:05 Damascus (RJ)
11:05 Rome (RJ)
11:15 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
11:30 Athens (RJ)
11:50 Dhahran (RJ)
12:30 Jeddah (RJ)
13:05 New Delhi (RJ)
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BRIEF

set for October

The U.N. Security Council will hold a meeting on June 1 in October because of the Western Sahara, the United Nations Secretary-General said. The meeting will be held in the Western Sahara, the United Nations Secretary-General said. The meeting will be held in the Western Sahara, the United Nations Secretary-General said.

ze Liberal book

Three have confiscated the book, said the author. The book is a collection of essays by the author, who is a member of the Liberal Party. The book is a collection of essays by the author, who is a member of the Liberal Party. The book is a collection of essays by the author, who is a member of the Liberal Party.

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The author has written a book about the history of the Jordanian theatre. The book is a collection of essays by the author, who is a member of the Liberal Party. The book is a collection of essays by the author, who is a member of the Liberal Party. The book is a collection of essays by the author, who is a member of the Liberal Party.

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MARKET PRICES

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MEETING UNIVERSITY STAFF: Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Saturday receives a group of Yarmouk University staff who called at the prime ministry to congratulate him on forming his new government. Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker told the group that the government was determined to support Jordanian universities' efforts towards achieving excellence and in graduating highly qualified students.

Stressing the importance of quality, Sharif Zeid said that Jordanian universities should serve as centres of enlightenment, which enjoy freedom of expression and free and open dialogue and as centres for scientific research benefiting the entire country. Speakers for the group wished the new government success in its mission (Petra photo)

Road construction, repairs to start earlier — ministry

AMMAN (Petra) — In response to Cabinet directives, the Ministry of Public Works and Housing will this month start floating tenders for the construction and repair of agricultural roads in the governorates, which is nearly two months ahead of the schedule followed in previous years, according to Mohammad Ensour, director of the ministry's Roads Department Saturday.

Mr. Ensour said that the ministry has a budget allocation of JD 63.995 million for roads during 1995; treasury will fund JD 42 million and the rest will be funded through loans.

Of the total budget item, JD 23 million has been allocated for agricultural roads in various regions, added Mr. Ensour.

During 1995, the ministry will start several projects including the construction of the 72-kilometre Ras Naqab-Aqaba Road which is expected to cost JD 40 million, the 36-kilometre Karak-Ostameh Road which will cost JD 26 million, the 14.5-kilometre road linking Madaba with Um Al Amad which will cost JD 9 million and the 15-kilometre North Shuneh Road at the cost of JD 10 million.

During 1995, Mr. Ensour added, the ministry will also complete the 31.5-kilometre Zar-Ghor Haditha Road in the Jordan Valley which is expected to cost JD 20 million, the eight kilometre Irbid-North Shuneh Road at JD 8 million and the 30-kilometre Arda-Jordan Valley Road at about JD 4.5 million. Work on these roads began in previous years, he said.



The road between Salt and the Jordan Valley (File photo)

Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Friday issued directives to government departments and ministries urging them to implement projects as early as possible during the fiscal year to avoid requiring any re-allocation of funds.

4 House committees elect new chairmen

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament finance, foreign affairs, agriculture and education committees Saturday elected new chairmen to replace those who were appointed ministers to the newly-formed Cabinet of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker.

The Finance Committee will play the role of watchdog over the various government department's expenditures and will ensure that these departments follow the general terms and provisions of the 1995 fiscal budget, said new chairman Hashem Dabbas who replaced Ali Abul Ragheb, now minister of industry and trade.

Dr. Dabbas said his committee would support and help the Audit Bureau in its drive to maintain control over department's financial activities and would actively help in the process of economic reform.

Meanwhile, the newly-



Abdullah Ensour



Hashem Dabbas

elected chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Abdullah Ensour, said in a statement Saturday that the committee would focus on Israel's withdrawal from occupied Jordanian territories on Feb. 10. Dr. Ensour said his committee would maintain contacts with

Jordanian territories will take place in coordination between the two sides without the presence of any international observers, noting that Israel and Jordan have decided that they will not have demilitarised zones separating the two countries.

The House Agriculture Committee elected Ali Shatti as its chairman to succeed Nader Thuheirir who became minister of municipal and rural affairs and the environment.

The House Education Committee elected Abdul Majid Al Aqtash as chairman to succeed Awad Khleifat who became minister of youth.

It was also announced Saturday that the Lower House will convene Sunday afternoon to hear government replies to queries raised by deputies and to refer several draft laws to specialised committees for study.

Jordanian, Palestinian commerce groups sign protocol

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Chambers of Commerce of Amman and Nablus Saturday signed a protocol to promote trade and investments in Jordan and Palestine.

The protocol provides for facilitating the missions of the business community from either side and encouraging them to launch joint investment projects.

Muath Nabulsi, president of the Nablus Chamber of Commerce told Jordan Television that Nablus continues to provide Jordan with vegetable oil, soap, stone for building, and vegetables and fruits.

Expressing satisfaction with the protocol Mr. Nabulsi said that it opens the way for direct exchange of information on joint investments in the two countries and potential cooperation in economic affairs, noting that the protocol signed Saturday complements the one signed two weeks ago between the counterpart federations of chambers of commerce.

Haider Murad, president of the Amman Chamber of Commerce, signed the protocol with Mr. Nabulsi.

The protocol will definitely back the private sectors on both sides, said Mr. Murad who also expressed hope that Jordan and Palestine will soon finalise and conclude the overall Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement.



Minister of Administrative Development Mohieddin Toq Saturday discusses bilateral cooperation in public administration spheres with visiting Yemeni Minister of Administrative Reform Sadeq Abu Ras (Petra photo)

Yemen, Jordan explore cooperation in public administration area

AMMAN (Petra) — Yemeni Minister of Administrative Reform Sadeq Abu Ras Saturday opened official talks with Minister of Administrative Development Mohieddin Toq on bilateral cooperation.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Mr. Abu Ras said the two sides discussed exchanging expertise and training in public administration.

The Yemeni minister was briefed on Jordan's experiences in the field of civil

service and administrative reforms as well as legislation aimed at upgrading public administration in Jordan.

The two sides discussed prospects of Yemen benefiting from Jordanian experiences in training Yemeni personnel at the University of Jordan and other institutions.

Mr. Abu Ras briefed Dr. Toq on Yemen's endeavours to upgrade its public administration system.

The Yemeni minister said that Jordan and Yemen maintain very strong ties, and

he hoped that they would continue to coordinate on all matters.

He also voiced appreciation of Jordan's support for Yemen's unity.

In his statement upon arrival here Friday Mr. Abu Ras said that his country was currently discussing with Jordan an appropriate date for convening a meeting of the higher Jordanian-Yemeni joint committee to discuss further steps to advance bilateral ties.

Arabic advertising weekly to expand into women's issues

By Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A weekly Arabic newspaper, Al Fursa, which was the first and is still the only newspaper in Jordan to host classified advertisements will soon expand to cater to women's readership, International Investment Company General Manager Zuhair Nabulsi said recently.

Selling, buying, renting and letting presently depend on two main methods of advertising: commercial advertisements or word-of-mouth.

The first is costly, the second free, but limited. Classified advertisements provide what each of the other two lack — an inexpensive (possibly free) means of advertising that stretches beyond the neighbourhood.

"We live in a social society," Mr. Nabulsi said in an interview with the Jordan

Times. "Most people rely on friends, family, relations or posted signs to buy and sell things, but now with the steady growth of the economy, people don't have so much spare time to go through those procedures," he added.

Under the ownership of International Investment Trading Company, Al Fursa Arabic weekly newspaper was launched in October 1993.

Solely dedicated to advertisements, Al Fursa tabloid offers that which no other newspaper in the Kingdom offers — a classified advertisement section.

The newspaper costs 200 fils, but classified advertisements are free of charge.

"If you are looking for something like a car to buy or a flat to rent, then you should pay for the service of having many options listed at your disposal,"

Mr. Nabulsi said. Despite a JD 40,000 publicity campaign and high printing costs, Mr. Nabulsi said that Al Fursa was now breaking even, although not as yet, making a profit.

Distribution currently reaches 5,000 to 7,000 readers a week, but, he said, at some exhibitions, additional copies are distributed freely as a promotional bid.

Al Fursa will shortly attempt to fill another gap, according to Mr. Nabulsi, who added that the newspaper and magazine market lacked a locally produced women's publication.

According to women's activist Asma Khader, there are publications, but their issuance is sporadic because of poor financial support and inadequate distribution.

Ms. Khader added, however, that a new magazine, Assafira, recently

launched its first issue and, she said, it remained to be seen if it would continue regularly.

Mr. Nabulsi told the Jordan Times that a licence to produce written material had already been obtained, and for the meantime, information and articles were being collected.

"We want to address women's matters, problems, feminism, methods of education, awareness of rights," among other issues such as cooking tips, recipes, and fashion, he said.

Women's activists Hafsa Abu Ghazaleh and Buthaina Jardaneh are being consulted, Mr. Nabulsi said, for information, suggestions and advice.

The expanded newspaper is expected to begin in March, he anticipated, and pending its success, it may be increased to two weekly editions.

Iraq says 5,000 dead

(Continued from page 12)

The Financial Times quoted a spokesman for the delegation, Edmund Sykes, as saying the companies involved were aware they might be playing into the hands of Iraq.

Some British firms are concerned that they are losing trade to rivals from other countries whose governments may be less strict about enforcing the United Nations embargo. France is actively campaigning for the trade ban to be relaxed.

Algiers cool to opposition call

(Continued from page 12)

early on Saturday by Algerian security forces in Algiers.

But ANSA, which said it had learned of the arrest from the Algiers correspondent of Spain's EFE news agency, said it did not know the motive for the detention or the whereabouts of Mr. Zaaf and his children.

Meanwhile, the World Bank announced a \$150 million economic rehabilitation loan for Algeria to provide urgent assistance for economic reforms and help meet the population's basic needs. The loan has a 17-year term with a five-year grace period.

The money was aimed at speeding up the economic transition toward a market economy and developing a private sector in Algeria, the bank said in a statement. Algeria endured a stagnant economy while its population grew 2.5 per cent in the last year.



DISCUSSING EDUCATIONAL TIES: Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh Saturday meets with Indonesian Ambassador to Jordan Mohammad Hassan Adany. Discussion at the meeting focused on means of enhancing Jordanian-Indonesian cooperation, especially in educational and cultural fields (Petra photo)

Environmental action week to start in Aqaba today

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Environment Society (JES), in cooperation with the German Friedrich Naumann Foundation, today begins a week of environmental programmes in Aqaba, according to the foundation's representative, Walter Rudel.

A total of 34 students and young environmentalists will receive a week's training in the techniques of solving and visualising environmental case-studies.

Intensive knowledge on some major global and national environmental events will be provided and related printed material will be distributed, said Mr. Rudel.

Additionally, together with the Aqaba branch of JES, an evening forum on Aqaba and the marine environment will be conducted, during which all environmental hazards in the port-city will be discussed and ways and means of approaching them will be suggested, he said.

During the morning sessions, a comprehensive environmental exhibition will be on display, and students from Aqaba schools will get guided tours and proper introductory information on global, regional and national environmental conditions, Mr. Rudel said.

Environmental action weeks are organised throughout the year in all major cities in order to increase knowledge and awareness in favour of environmental protection and well-being in Jordan, said the foundation representative.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

SOUTH AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL
★ Film entitled "Taxi to Soweto" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibition entitled "Phase II: Doors and Win-

dows" by Jordanian artist Ghada Dahdaleh. Also showing an exhibition by contemporary Arab artists at Darat Al Funun.

★ Exhibition of works by Hala Mahayni at the Petra International Hotel in Aqaba.

★ Exhibition of abstract art by Zakaria Barakat at the Housing Bank Gallery.

SARAJEVO (R) — Big power envoys met Bosnian Muslim leaders Saturday for talks on a peace settlement after the United Nations scored a major victory by forcing rival sides to reopen supply routes into the besieged capital.

U.N. relief spokesman Kris Janowski told Reuters the route between Serb-held suburbs of Ilidza and Lukavica opened first as scheduled at 0700 GMT for two hours.

"One civilian car passed from Ilidza to Livno at exactly 8 a.m. and 20 minutes later a convoy of three civilian cars passed in the other direction," said Mr. Janowski.

The reopening of vital supply land routes follows

Big power envoys, on a tour of former Yugoslavia this week in a bid to resuscitate Bosnia peace talks, met Bosnia's Muslim-led leaders, including President Alija Izetbegovic, his deputy Ejup Ganic and Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic.

Under the plan, the Bosnian government and allied Bosnian Croats would control 51 per cent of the former Yugoslav Republic and the Serbs would have 49 per cent, meaning they would have to cede one-third of territory they now control.

The U.N. troops have largely been used to man demarcation lines between Croats and rebel Krajina Serbs who gained control of a third of Croatia during Zagreb's bloody seven-month fight for independence from federal Yugoslavia in 1991.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic and British member of the contact group, Lord David Hannay, are seen with other members of the contact group in Sarajevo. The group has been

Yugoslavia see plan from the Bosnian gover (AFP photo)

"At the moment, I cannot exactly say when, but we should weigh the timing while watching the situation after local elections," he told a news conference during a day trip to the northern provincial city of Sapporo.

But Mr. Murayama said the SDP forms a solid voting bloc and cannot accept a separate force within itself. "We have to persuade them into taking joint action," he said.

The SDP now faces the possibility of a total loss in Senate polls in July and the next general elections, seen likely to be called by the end of this year.

pop album soon to be released. Police said the burglars picked the front door locks at the family's West London home in the early hours Friday. They said the thieves had known precisely what they were looking for and ignored a host of other instruments in the home's ground-floor music room. They said the violin was insured.

nishings from his New York flat netted more than \$7.9 million, breaking some records in a two-day auction at Christie's that ended Friday. The auction's take was double the pre-sale estimate of

the Industrial Cities
Union considers estab-
lishing a new industrial city in
cooperation with
University. The pro-
ject will be financed by the
Government aid to the Kingdom
(four).

The measurements cited are on the Richter scale. Each time the Richter magnitude increases by one the ground

But based on study of geological evidence quakes in

the size of last year's. Less frequent, larger incidents would account for the remaining 70 per cent.

President Nelson Mandela's unity government, has denied any wrongdoing in granting the clandestine amnesties

ment forces stopped their march to recapture the rebel region of Abkhazia, a senior official said.

Georgia's form

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Sister detained

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Georgian Radio said five men were wounded during

Georgia maintains a fragile Russian-mediated truce with Abkhazian separatists who drove government forces

Ithuriel's Lance, a subject from John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, came in second at \$761,500. A record was also set for painter Charles Meynier whose *Wisdom Defending Youth Against Love* brought \$486,000. The Roman marble torso *Prophet* is

electric power-
in each of these
such, the growth in
generated for local
7.7 per cent. The
reached 794 mega-
1994, compared to

There was no immediate news of his fate. Earlier, a grenade was thrown into the headquarters of Mr. Matthews' political party, the United Peoples Party.

Night-time vigilante patrols have been organised across the city, sending the crime rate plummeting and

Thompson's team musters around 25 to 35 men. It's not enough, and not easy as many of them work during the day, but the men say they have no choice.

Deputy District Attorney Chris Darden told Superior Court Judge Lance Ito he and fellow black lawyer Johnny Cochran, one of Mr. Simpson's lead defence attorneys, had been chosen to debate

documents that in an interview with a police psychiatrist in 1981 Mr. Fuhrman used the racial epithet "nigger" on several occasions.

There was no legal or valid

Hollywood, launched a blistering attack on Mr. Darden's remarks and took the opportunity to accuse the prosecution team of being less than professional.

Dreamworks SAG is a fisherman holding a tiny "A future of opportunities." The trio's next move will be to find an appropriate site for the studio, surrounded by ne-

and the other increased last (tour). Jordan Petroleum Company

A ceasefire that began on Dec. 28 is more or less holding.

tually all unarmed, were burnt to death and hacked to pieces by as yet unidentified gunmen in a display of bar-

around after this time is turned over to the African peacekeeping force ECOMOG.

ment in which he said he was under stress because he could not handle the pressure of working with minorities.

the defence wanted to use the "n" word — it was never pronounced in full during the hearing — in the trial in order

He said Mr. Cochran wanted to "play the ace of

Judge Ito has said he intends to have opening arguments in the case next Thursday or Friday.

year, the partnership's television division has already struck a production deal with ABC for a television series.

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...Most of the
...ere in the Az-

Antique violin
stolen from
teenage prodigy

LONDON (AFP) — A 16-year-old music prodigy, Vanessa-Mae Nicholson, was said to be devastated by the theft of her \$320,000 18th-century Italian-made Guadagnoli violin, press reports said. "She is still in a state of shock because the violin has been all over the world with her and she made the world debut with the London Symphony Orchestra playing it," the Singapore-born daughter of a music family said. "There is a lot of her history attached to it, and she has played it for years, and she would love for it to be returned." Vanessa has been hailed as one of the finest violinists of her generation and has several acclaimed classical recordings, with a pop album soon to be released. Police said the violin was stolen from her home in London on Friday. The thieves had known her father, who was looking after her, and ignored a host of instruments in the room, she said. The violin was valued at \$320,000.

Record-breaking
Christie's sale
of Nureyev items

NEW YORK (R) — A record-breaking Christie's sale of Nureyev items, including a collection of his jewelry, art and photographs, ended on Friday with a two-day auction. The sale, which began on Thursday, ended with a record-breaking \$1.2 million for a pair of Nureyev's diamond-encrusted slippers. The slippers, which were worn by the dancer during his performance in the 1961 film "The Red Shoes", were sold for \$1.2 million, a record for any pair of slippers. The sale also included a collection of Nureyev's jewelry, including a diamond-encrusted watch and a pair of diamond-encrusted slippers. The sale was held at Christie's in New York City.

elberg,
tainers
ne their studio
amworks SKG

ADENA, California — Film director Steven Spielberg and his wife, actress Catherine Keener, have named their new production company "Dreamworks SKG". The name is a combination of Spielberg's first name, "Steven", and the initials "SKG" for his wife, Keener, and his production company, "Amblin Entertainment". The company was founded in 1994 and has produced several films, including "The Iron Pigeon" and "The Land Before Time". Spielberg and Keener are both producers and directors of films. Spielberg's most recent film, "The Iron Pigeon", was released in 1994. Keener's most recent film, "The Land Before Time", was released in 1994.



Chechen women with an automatic weapon walk to the frontline in downtown Grozny. According to reports, Russia

sent reinforcements of several hundred naval personnel including Marines to the breakaway republic (AFP photo)

Grozny inhabitants brave shelling to fetch water

GROZNY, Russia (AFP) — Bundled up in an old brown coat, her head covered with a red and yellow check headscarf, a Russian woman in her seventies struggles with her two small plastic buckets full of water.

Despite the nearby thud of artillery, like hundreds of other inhabitants in the besieged capital of the breakaway Republic of Chechnya, the old woman has been out to fetch water at the only supply point in this district in the south of the city, which has been spared bombing raids so far.

From dawn, people start converging on the old underground reservoir in the middle of a muddy field, some of them coming from more than five kilometres away.

Three old prams and a

metal trolley are parked in the vicinity, while their owners take advantage of the rare outing to exchange news on the latest districts to be hit by the Russian artillery.

"Nobody has analysed this water, but we don't have any choice," said a man, who was filling up his metal cans. A black rubber tube was fitted into the pierced pipework two days ago to enable people to help themselves.

A few yards away, Zarima and Roman Kharikhanov, brother and sister, are making their way home carrying two buckets. Three days ago a Russian plane bombed just next to the spring where they used to fetch their supplies. Since then they have preferred to go farther afield.

"We have nowhere to go and who would take us in now with our nationality?" said Zarima, a cheerful 20-year-old Russian girl, whose bright smile is a welcome relief from the overwhelming misery on faces everywhere in this city.

"We are used to the bombing, you can get used to anything," she added. Zarima, a bright red shawl over her head, had to give up her studies a year ago because of the economic chaos in Chechnya since its unilateral declaration of independence in 1991.

Fetching water is a daily preoccupation all over Grozny. "You can live without electricity or gas, but not without water," said Zaria Kuduzova, who had come to

fetch water at the artificial lake on the southern exit from Grozny.

The women get a teenager to help them across the lake, which is frozen over, but the ice is thin.

"The water isn't good to drink. I only come here for my two old cows," David Emorayev, 66, told AFP. His house in a nearby district was destroyed by a shell a week ago.

A few kilometres farther west, where the bombing raids on the capital are only a distant noise, the water situation is not yet critical: At Urus Martane, cars are parked in the bed of the river Gekhi, which is also frozen over. Their owners are still concerned about keeping their vehicles clean.

Investigators hunt for clues to Colombia air crash

CARTAGENA, Colombia (AFP) — Investigators searched Friday for clues to explain Wednesday's airliner crash in which 51 people died, the latest aviation tragedy in a country where drug terror, safety blunders and guerrilla attacks make flying a high-risk activity.

Civil Aviation Authority Director Alvaro Rueda said technical problems appeared to be the most likely reason why the DC9 on a flight from Bogota to the coastal resort of Cartagena suddenly plunged to the ground and exploded.

Only one passenger survived the crash, a nine-year-old girl named Erika Delgado who was recovering in a hospital after suffering multiple fractures and emotional trauma.

"The impression we have so far without making conjectures is that there must have been a fault which was sufficiently serious to prevent the pilot from being able to report it," said Captain Estefan Gomez, head of the crash investigation team. "There are no signs of an explosion inside the aircraft."

Colombian officials invited a team from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration to help but added that until the DC9's "black box" flight and voice recorders were found it would be difficult to make much progress in the crash probe.

A local government official erroneously reported Thursday that the flight and voice recorders had been located by navy divers in the lake near the town of Maria La Baja, 330 miles (530 kilometres) north of Bogota,



Rescue workers carry the body of a victim of a Colombian DC9 crash outside Cartagena. Of all 52 passengers, only a

nine-year-old girl reportedly survived the crash (AFP photo)

where the plane came down.

As rescue teams paddling canoes across the lake brought out the last of the bodies and flew them by helicopter to a makeshift morgue in Cartagena, Capt. Gomez said in a radio interview that investigators had found marks gouged into the ground by the plane near where the wreckage was discovered.

This suggested the pilot attempted an emergency landing but crashed into an embankment at the edge of the water, he added. Both Capt. Gomez and Mr. Rueda dismissed as irresponsible some reports suggesting the crash was caused by a terrorist bomb, saying none of the evidence supported such an argument.

Colombia has one of the world's worst air safety re-

records, with several major disasters and a host of minor ones notched up in the last seven years. The International Airline Passengers Association advised its members in September 1993 to avoid flying in or out of Colombia.

Studies by the Association of Fatal Crashes between 1983 and 1992 showed that Colombia had an aviation accident rate 20 times higher than the United States and Canada.

The worst incidents included the November 1989 bombing by drug traffickers of an Avianca Airlines jet, killing 107 people. Another 137 died when an Avianca jet crashed near Cucuta Airport in March 1988 and 132 others perished when a Boeing owned by SAM, an Avianca subsidiary, slammed into the side of a mountain in May 1993.

Relatives of the dead in Wednesday's crash lost no time in blaming Intercontinental de Aviacion, the Colombian Airline that owned the plane on doomed Flight 256.

"That plane was held up for six hours before it left for emergency maintenance. It should never have been allowed to fly," shouted a man at Bogota Airport, who declined to give his name.

Intercontinental Managing Director Alfonso Ramirez denied the accusations, saying the delay was caused by airport congestion and the plane was in good condition despite being 29 years old. Radio commentators, however, suggested that perhaps it was time for Colombia to look again at scrapping older planes and forcing airlines to renew their fleets.

Over 150 feared dead in Bangladesh train collision

DHAKA (R) — The Bangladeshi prime minister flew Saturday to the scene of a train crash in northern Bangladesh as rescue workers hacked their way through twisted wreckage and they feared the death toll could top 150.

While officials insisted that fewer than 30 had died in the overnight collision near Dinajpur, close to the Indian border, reporters on the spot said this appeared to be an attempt to limit compensation payments to the victims' families.

"I know more than 100 bodies had been plucked from the rubble by daybreak," said one government rescuer, who declined to be identified.

The number of injuries is no less than 500, maybe more, and dozens among them are simply fighting for their lives," he told a reporter.

The collision occurred late Friday when a passenger train travelling at high speed slammed into a stationary one at Hilly station near Dinajpur, 475 kilometres from Dhaka.

"This is a major accident involving two trains, one heavily crowded for a night trip," one reporter told Reuters.

Witnesses said many of the injured had been taken across the Indian border just 100 metres from the crash site to hospitals in West Bengal state.

"Saving lives is the first priority, so India was the natural choice," one reporter quoted an official as saying.

Police in Khulna, a southern district town 280 kilometres from Hilly where one of the doomed trains had been heading, said they also feared the toll could rise to 200.

It was the worst train crash in Bangladesh since January

the injured and prayed for their early recovery, witnesses said.

"We are really puzzled by the official figures," said Motiur Rahman, editor of the local daily Uttar Bangla, after visiting the scene.

"If we take it... then where have the truckloads of bodies people saw gone."

"There is no formal search operation as such. Local people, helped by police, were seen cutting steel plates from the mangled coaches and taking out dead and injured," he said.

Mr. Rahman said Premier Zia had been deeply moved by horror tales told by wailing widows and bereaved parents and children.

He said he believed the final death toll could well top 200.

Akhtar Hossain, a student leader in Hilly, said he and his companions had retrieved 30 bodies in a single hour.

Railway officials speculated that the accident might have been due to "non-setting of points" or to faulty signals.

They said the Hilly station master and pointsman had been suspended on suspicion of neglecting their duties.

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It was the worst train crash in Bangladesh since January

1989 when 135 people were killed and over 1,000 injured as two packed trains collided at Pubail 24 kilometres from Dhaka.

In a separate development, Bangladesh's opposition leader Sheikh Hasina said an agreement to end the country's 10-month political crisis was possible but doubted whether Prime Minister Zia would stick to it.

"She may back out as she has done on several occasions before," Mrs. Hasina told Reuters as negotiators sought to resolve what is known in Dhaka as the "battle of the two women."

Mrs. Hasina has led an opposition boycott of parliament which began last February as part of a campaign to drive from office a government she alleges is anti-democratic and willing to do anything to stay in power.

Almost the entire opposition banded in their resignations from parliament on Dec. 28 as the battle intensified to force Mrs. Zia to quit and allow a neutral caretaker government to supervise fresh elections.

Mrs. Hasina said in an interview late Friday she was not interested in the constitutional niceties of where power should lie in the interim, now under intense discussion by negotiators.

The constitution vests executive power in the prime minister, who announced a day after the opposition resignation from parliament that she would step down 30 days before elections due in 1996.

But if there is no prime minister, who must be chosen from parliament, who wields power?

Mediators are trying to figure out how to give power temporarily to President Abdul Rahman Biswas, with

the opposition pressing for a constitutional amendment. Mrs. Zia has rejected the idea but one of her ministers has suggested a new flexibility on the issue.

Mrs. Hasina was impatient at such legalities. "It's a political decision. If you make the decision, everything can be resolved," she said.

"The trouble is they haven't decided what they really want to do. They are just making confusion and hoping in this way they can stay in power for a long time," she said.

Mistrust and dislike for Mrs. Zia, the widow of a former military president and who declined to be interviewed, was evident in everything Mrs. Hasina said.

The opposition leader is the daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who led Bangladesh to independence from Pakistan in a war in 1971 or to be killed by army officers four years later.

"For instance, the day we were handing in our resignations (from parliament) that woman said she was ready to do something and please would we wait," Mrs. Hasina said.

"We waited for two hours to give her a chance and nothing happened."

Government ministers are equally scornful of Mrs. Hasina. One, who asked not to be named, said of the same incident: "Hasina was well aware that the prime minister would announce her decision to step down 30 days before elections and went ahead with the resignations anyway."

Mrs. Hasina said she had no intention of returning to parliament. The opposition resignation have not yet been accepted in an attempt to give negotiators more time to end the battle.

Perry ends visit to India

NEW DELHI (Agencies) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry left India for Washington Saturday at the end of a week-long trip to the Middle East and South Asia. U.S. officials said.

Mr. Perry left only hours before U.S. Commerce Secretary Ron Brown was set to arrive in the Indian capital at the start of a five-day visit to promote business ties.

Mr. Perry spent the day touring an air force base and visiting the Taj Mahal in Agra, south of the Indian capital.

During his three-day stay in India, Mr. Perry signed an agreement cementing bilateral defence ties which he said opened a new era in security relations between the two cold war antagonists.

Before India, Mr. Perry visited Pakistan, Israel and Egypt. He was the first U.S. defence secretary to visit India since the end of the cold war.

Mr. Perry warned Saturday that rising religious fundamentalism in South Asia posed a threat to stability in the region.

The Pentagon chief, in an interview to a television network before leaving for Washington, said people using violence in the name of religion were "destabilising" the region.

"We are concerned with people using religious cover for violent action for taking away the freedom of others," Mr. Perry said in reply to questions on the Muslim separatist campaign raging in India's northern Kashmir state.

"We see it going all over the world and we see plenty (of religious extremism) in South Asia and we are concerned over it, as it would prove to be a force for instability in the region," Mr. Perry told the Eyewitness network.

Mr. Perry said Washington's "new security relation" with New Delhi and Islamabad would help in resolving the Kashmir conflict.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and training Kashmir's Islamic guerrillas. Islamabad denies the charge but extends moral and diplomatic support to the drive, which has claimed more than 10,000 lives since 1989 in the Himalayan region.

Kashmir has been the cause of two of the three wars India and Pakistan have fought since the 1947 independence of the South Asian subcontinent.

Italy's Dini prepares to form cabinet

ROME (R) — Lamberto Dini began work Saturday on forming Italy's 54th government since world war II as newspapers applauded his appointment but debated how long it would be before fresh elections were held.

The influential Corriere Della Sera declared the choice of Mr. Dini, the outgoing treasury minister, as prime minister-designate "an honourable truce" following the bitter political row over the succession to Silvio Berlusconi who resigned on Dec. 22.

"Dini, a new chapter opens," was the banner headline on the front page of La Repubblica, a daily which has been one of the strongest opponents of media magnate Berlusconi.

Former central banker Dini gathered his closest aides at the Treasury Ministry Saturday as he set to work on a cabinet he has said will consist of technocrats drawn from outside the world of party politics.

Observers said he could have his list of ministers ready by the middle of next week and the signs are that his government will win broad support in parliament, at least initially.

Newspapers agreed that

Antonio Di Pietro, the former Milan magistrate who became a folk hero for his work in fighting corruption, was a leading candidate for either the post of justice or interior minister.

But Mr. Di Pietro repeated Saturday that he had no plans to enter politics.

"I'm honoured by suggestions that I may be offered a job in government but I repeat that it is not my intention to play any role in politics," he told reporters in Milan.

The constitution does not allow either Mr. Dini or President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, the man who appointed him, to set a time limit on his premiership and political parties are already bickering over how long Mr. Dini should govern.

Mr. Dini, who is not a member of any party and only entered politics when Mr. Berlusconi made him treasury minister last May, said his government had a clear four-point programme.

He said the government must pass a mini-budget to rein in Italy's runaway deficit, overhaul the pension system, ensure fair representation in the media for all political parties and reform

the electoral system ahead of regional polls this spring.

Billionaire businessman Berlusconi, swept to power in general elections 10 months ago, said that the Dini solution would only work if it were swiftly followed by elections.

"For the moment I'm saying goodbye, but I'll be back soon," Mr. Berlusconi told reporters.

Cesare Previti, coordinator of Mr. Berlusconi's Forza Italia party, told the daily La Stampa that the government could have its programme through parliament by April, paving the way for elections in June.

"This is a government that could be ready in a few days and could resign in early April," he said. "By June we can vote again to finally give this country a stable government."

But Umberto Bossi, leader of the Northern League whose mutiny brought down Mr. Berlusconi's seven-month-old coalition, said Mr. Dini's appointment would extend the life of the current parliament indefinitely.

"So much water will flow under the bridge before elections are held that Berlusconi will die of boredom and old age," Mr. Bossi said.

Sonia Gandhi may not be averse to politics

NEW DELHI (AFP) — The widow of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi Saturday denied she authorised a family friend to say she would never take to politics, an indication that she might not be opposed to a political career.

Sonia Gandhi reacted sharply to a statement issued Thursday by Mohammad Yunus, a friend of Gandhi family, that the Italian-born woman had said she would never join a political party.

"I would rather beg in the streets of Delhi than join (a party) or allow my children to enter politics," Mr. Yunus quoted Sonia Gandhi as telling him.

An aide to Sonia Gandhi said: "Gandhi has issued no statement nor authorised any statement on her behalf." Sonia Gandhi does not talk directly to the press.

Disidents in Congress (I) Party of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao have been urging the charismatic Sonia Gandhi to take to politics, but she has never publicly reacted to their demands.

Saturday's comments by her aide were the first indication since Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in May 1991 that Sonia, who enjoys tremendous clout in the Congress, may not be opposed to a political career.

Sonia Gandhi is widely believed to be pulling political

strings in the bitter inner-party struggle aimed at ousting Premier Rao.

A former federal minister, Arjun Singh, who quit the cabinet on Dec. 24 in a direct challenge to Mr. Rao, has met repeatedly with Sonia Gandhi and did so again Friday.

Political observers have said that Sonia Gandhi, who is counted among the most powerful figures in India although she holds no government or political post, may be quietly backing Arjun Singh.

Sonia married Rajiv Gandhi in 1968, but declined a Congress request to take up the party leadership after his assassination, enabling Mr. Rao to become India's ninth prime minister.

The Nehru-Gandhi dynasty ruled India for 40 years, beginning with Jawaharlal Nehru, the country's first premier, his daughter, Indira Gandhi, and her son, Rajiv.

Meanwhile nearly 100 per cent of urban Indians are convinced that politicians, cabinet ministers and the police are corrupt, according to a poll published in the Times of India Saturday.

Ninety-eight per cent of the 1,544 men and women surveyed in six cities said they were "convinced that politicians and ministers are corrupt," followed by the police

(97 per cent) and civil servants (86 per cent).

The poll said 80 per cent of those surveyed said lawyers were dishonest and 66 per cent doubted the integrity of judges.

Another 55 per cent put journalists in the corruption league.

The poll was carried out in New Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore and Hyderabad.

"Corruption may be a global phenomenon... but there is more of it in India than anywhere else," the newspaper commented. "It has come to pervade all professions the public has to deal with, and it has grown in the last three to four years."

The paper said getting police help without paying bribes was considered the most difficult of all, while 66 per cent of people saw no chance of getting a gas, electricity or telephone connection without greasing palms, and 60 per cent had no hopes of admission into schools and colleges in a straightforward manner.

Tireless Pope makes security men nervous

MANILA (R) — Pope John Paul threw himself Saturday into the busiest day so far of his visit to the Philippines which climaxed with an ecstatic reception from hundreds of thousands of people at a youth rally.

With events lasting from early morning until late evening, the 74-year-old Pontiff showed no signs of flagging on the third day of an 11-day tour that will take him from the Philippines on to Papua New Guinea, Australia and Sri Lanka.

He was clearly delighted with the response he has received in Asia's only mainly Roman Catholic country, although it has given his security men some nervous moments.

Exuberant crowds threatened at one point to overwhelm his guards at a Catholic media awards ceremony in the afternoon.

The smiling Pope appeared unconcerned by the pushing and shoving around him. He responded by waving the silver-topped walking stick he has used since a leg operation

last year.

The Pope himself had earlier veered away from his bodyguards to get nearer to the people on his way into the ceremony.

"We get nervous every time the Pope tries to get closer to the people," police Major Edmund Casanian told Reuters.

The Pontiff appeared to relish the contact, again waving his cane playfully when greeted by dancers at a youth rally in central Manila's Luneta Park to mark the eve of World Youth Day.

The crowd, estimated by police at up to half a million, exploded in a frenzy of joy when the Pope arrived at the park, beating drums, setting off firecrackers and singing and chanting for 15 minutes.

World Youth Day, the highlight of his four-day visit, will be marked by a mass at the park Sunday morning.

"We are not especially concerned. Nothing has changed in our plans and nothing will change for the rest of the stay of the holy father here," Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls told reporters.

The Philippine government has confirmed two people have been arrested but has refused to disclose details of the plot.

Security sources, however, say it involves a gang of extremists who sneaked into the country over a period of several months led by a man of Palestinian descent.

Addressing a morning mass and later a gathering of Filipino bishops, the Pope spoke bluntly about contraception and social problems facing this nation of 65 million people, some 85 per cent of whom are Catholics.

"Because the church treasures the divine gifts of human life and its inalienable dignity, she cannot but strenuously oppose all measures which are in any way directed at promoting abortion, ster-

ilisation and also contraception," Pope John Paul said.

It was his first comment on an issue which has caused increasingly bitter exchanges between the local church and the government of President Fidel Ramos, which promotes family planning programmes.

The government says family planning is one way to help alleviate the poverty which afflicts more than two-thirds of the population, according to United Nations estimates.

The Pontiff also attacked poverty and the unequal distribution of wealth.

"Too many families remain without land to till or a home to live in, and too many people are without employment and basic services," he said in a speech released by his aides.

"Your task must be to help create a new attitude, a conviction shaped by the principle of the social purpose of power and wealth, which can lead to appropriate changes in the prevailing order," he told the bishops.

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Sounding the alarm

THE QUEST for protecting the Jordanian consumer received royal support this week when His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan met with the president and members of the Protection of Consumers Society (PCC) and called on them to breathe new life into their efforts to safeguard citizens from contaminated foodstuffs. The Crown Prince's involvement in the programme to protect Jordanians from dangerous foodstuffs took place against the backdrop of greater awareness by the public at large of the inherent dangers of unsafe food and vegetables. Several deputies in the Lower House of Parliament have recently sounded the alarm about the quality of meat that is being sold in the country. The response of the minister of health, Dr. Aref Batayneh, to these charges left a lot to be desired since he merely repeated the official policy line on controlling the quality of imported and locally produced meat without taking the necessary step of offering to investigate in earnest the allegations made by the deputies.

Coming to think of it, neither the Ministry of Health nor the Ministry of Agriculture have reacted in any meaningful way to other charges about contaminated vegetables and fruits. This issue has repeatedly been raised by the public and the mass media but that has not lessened the dangers inherent in the wrong use of pesticides and insecticides. To the amazement of many Jordanians, some farmers in this country still use internationally outlawed pesticides and insecticides that are known to cause cancer. The fact that the concerned ministers have refrained from refuting these charges to the satisfaction of the public is most disturbing to all of us. We feel it is highly irresponsible of any minister or department not to respond to legitimate public concerns at any given time.

The initiative of Crown Prince Hassan to expand the horizon of PCC and make it more effective comes therefore as no surprise. After all, the society itself needs overhaul and now is the time to invigorate and renew its mandate.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

DESPITE THE modest results of the Arab-Israeli-American meeting held in Washington under U.S. auspices this week, one can still point to certain vital elements included in the final communiqué, said Al Bustan daily Tuesday. The communiqué contained an Israeli commitment to halt the confiscation of Arab lands for setting up Jewish settlements and to refrain from funding the construction of any more settlements with state money, said the paper. At the same time, the communiqué reflected a renewed commitment on the part of the United States to exert more diplomatic efforts to ensure the success of the peace process and to accelerate the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli peace agreements, said the daily. What the Arabs want to see is an end to the Israeli siege of the occupied Arab lands, which has increased tension and has caused further deterioration in the living standards of the Arab people, add the paper. It said the Arabs want to see the Israelis taking practical steps to implement the Oslo agreement, which calls for the redeployment of the Israeli forces and arrangements for holding elections in the Arab lands as well as a complete halt to the building of settlements.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i urged wealthy Jordanians to contribute generously to the poor during the holy month of Ramadan, and said that the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF), which has experience in handling the donations, should be given a mandate to distribute the aid to the needy groups and families. Badri Al Mulaqi suggested that each member of a Muslim family pay half a dinar at the start of Eid Al Fitr with the QAF distributing the collected donations to the needy during the feast. The writer said that this donation should be over and above all other donations, which Muslim offer during the month of Ramadan. Should the contributions amount to great sums, he said, income generating projects ought to be started under QAF supervision to employ the poor and ensure income for their families.

Washington Watch

An illusion of peace

By Dr. James Zogby

I AM writing from Jerusalem. It is the month of Ramadan and all around me is a city in pain. It is my third visit to the city this year, and in some ways it is the most difficult.

I have come with U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown as part of his mission to promote economic development and the peace process. But one and a half years after the signing of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement, there is little evidence of peace or economic progress — especially for the Palestinians.

On this trip, I have met with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and other ministers of his government. I have met with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and other Palestinian ministers. In addition, I have met with separate groups of Israeli and Palestinian business and political leaders, and talked with ordinary citizens on both sides.

The "official line" being touted after the Cairo summit is that the "process is back on track" and that there is a "new momentum towards peace." But the reality is quite different.

All that Israelis will talk about is "the terror." From the most liberal and the most conservative Israeli, the message is the same: "Terror must stop for peace to go forward." It is a deeply felt consensus view.

All the Palestinians see is occupation and the terror that accompanies it. In the West Bank, in particular, it is evident that little has changed. The closure of Jerusalem is nearly complete. In some ways, the city has become a "no man's land." It's economy and its spirit are being killed as it ties with the West Bank diminish. Despair has replaced the hope that many felt just one year ago. And many of Jerusalem's young speak of leaving — they say, "there is no life for us here."

In travelling in any direction out of the city you can see the raped hillsides; fresh earth turned over and new settlements being constructed. There is new building in the established settlements. In so many ways, it is business as usual.

Going into or leaving Gaza, again seems strikingly similar to occupation. It is difficult to see what has changed.

If there is peace, someone forgot to tell the Israelis at the checkpoints or their Palestinian victims. Young men with guns facing grown up men in a line. The young Israelis shouting rudely, giving orders; the older, brooding Palestinians acting nervous and afraid, keeping their anger in. It is a classic portrait of power versus powerlessness. The daily humiliation of the checkpoint can't help but create hatred.

Inside Gaza you can see change. There are Palestinians in uniform and Palestinians in charge. The city is a little cleaner now and there is some building underway. But one gets the feeling that Gaza is in the eye of a storm — it is waiting. How long it can wait is difficult to tell.

Take the building, for example. Near the coast in Gaza

City you can see large buildings in various stages of completion, buildings not unlike those being erected in other Arab cities. But no matter what the degree of completion, the buildings wait. There is no infrastructure: no adequate water, electricity, telephone service and, especially, sewage treatment. Real streets in Gaza City are few and far between. Whatever the Israelis did during their 27-year occupation of Gaza, building or paving streets was not one of their priorities. Neither was sewage. One of the most common sights seen while travelling through Gaza City are the enormous ponds that cars must go through, even on most major roads. It is like riding through the park in Washington after a huge rainfall — except this wasn't rainwater, it was waste water.

The businessmen in Gaza are also waiting for loans, for the right to export their products, for the right to leave the country to seek investment, for material and massive and promised international aid that was to jumpstart their economy and give them the infrastructure they need to grow.

And the young men in Gaza are waiting, too, for jobs, for opportunities, for hope in a better future.

I came away from this trip with the sad realization that this process is giving peace a bad name. Many people don't even want to hear about peace or talk about it. There is a deep cynicism developing — something that summits and declarations won't cure.

I also came away with the conviction that this cycle of anger and fear, cynicism and despair and violence can be broken; but that would require addressing their root causes.

Peace requires that attitudes change. But for attitudes to change, reality must change first.

When the declaration of "mutual recognition" was signed, Palestinians and Israelis were both ready for such change to occur. But daily life has not changed, and old attitudes are retrenching.

Palestinians remain powerless. Their land continues to be taken from them, the humiliation and control and terror of the occupation remain facts of life. And this powerlessness has produced deformities in the culture: Anger, despair and cynicism.

Israelis remain in control. But their control is never complete and so they become victims of Palestinian despair and anger. And they, too, are deformed by the resulting anger, fear and cynicism.

It is interesting even to hear the way Israelis describe the "peace process." They say "we cannot give any more peace unless the terror stops." "Giving peace" means, for them, relinquishing control, surrendering power. This is something masters are always afraid to do for fear the slaves will turn on them to avenge past wounds. And so the Israelis have attempted, from the beginning, to have peace while still maintaining control — seeking to define the limits of

peace every step of the way. At times, the peace process might be better described as dictation and imposition, instead of dialogue and negotiation.

What is equally disturbing is the Israeli refusal to see cause and effect. The Israeli leadership and its supporters appear unable to assume responsibility for the anger and the violence that their skewed relationship with the Palestinians has brought into existence.

In their way of computing reality, it is as if all history begins with each new act of terror: Nothing happened before it, and no one (other than they) has suffered before the victims of this particular act. There is no effort to see the violence in a cycle or to understand why the perpetrators acted as they did or why there are people whose anger and despair bring them to support this or that crime.

Hence, in their view, Israelis speak about terror as if it were a mere malignancy, a foreign implant, that has invaded the peace process without a reason — to destroy it. The simplistic solution, in this view, is to "eradicate" or "exterminate" the terror by rounding up or otherwise eliminating its supporters.

Of course, it must be granted that there are groups and individuals who seek to destroy the peace process with terror. But if the process were really working, then the danger and despair on which these fanatics prey would evaporate, leaving them isolated in their respective circles. Ignoring that connection causes the Israelis and those who support them to view the elimination of terror in purely military and police terms.

Yet by acting on this view, the Israelis perpetuate acts of collective punishment (its own form of terror) designed to demonstrate their power and to remind the Palestinians of their powerlessness. It is lost on the Israelis that this simply produces more despair and anger, and creates more Palestinian victims who will support desperate acts of striking out against the master — and so the cycle of violence is perpetuated.

All of this is an old story. It was to have changed with peace and the "mutual recognition of rights." So far, it has not.

There are so many other things I learned on this visit, so many specific recommendations I will make in an effort to end the cycle and bring real change to the daily lives of the Israeli and Palestinian people.

But the first and simplest observation I can make is that: Yes, the terror must stop and yes, the process is impeded by the continuation of violence. But for the terror to stop, there must be a change in the daily life of Palestinians. And that requires less Israeli control, less humiliation, more opportunities and more respect for Palestinians' equal rights as human beings. These are the changes that were hoped for in September of 1993.

These are what peace was to have brought — and peace will not become real until these changes become real.

CIS future hangs in balance after 17th summit

By Brian Killen
Reuters

ALMA-ATA — The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), struggling to take joint decisions and hardly implementing them, is splitting into regional economic blocs which could shape the future of the 12-member grouping.

The 17th CIS summit, held in the Kazakh capital on Friday, was trumpeted as another step towards integrating the fractious former Soviet republics in embrace.

But Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev's dream of the CIS evolving into a "Eurasian union" which would involve much closer integration is as far from reality as ever.

Even the summit's show-

piece agreement, promoting peace and stability in the CIS, lacked teeth and was seen by Ukraine as a document strengthening the principles that have torpedoed so many CIS initiatives in the past.

"It is only a call on countries to adhere to some principles in our relations — for example integrity of borders, state sovereignty," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Hennady Udovenko told reporters. "It does no harm to remind people about these principles every time."

The CIS, set up on the ashes of the Soviet empire in late 1991, has been largely ineffectual as a successor to the Soviet Union because governments, jealous of their sovereignty, have been unwilling to delegate

powers to it. However, economic pragmatism has pushed Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus into a customs union which Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin believes could expand.

Another tripartite group, comprising Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, met on the fringes of the summit and agreed to strengthen economic ties and build on the "common economic space" they set up last year.

The main question now is whether these separate regional blocs can unite under the auspices of the Interstate Economic Council, the first supranational CIS body that will have powers to override member governments.

But, if Friday's summit is

anything to go by, it will be some time before the acorns of economic cooperation take root and grow.

"Some sort of core union emerge from this, but prospects for them seeing eye-to-eye on key issues are slim," said a Western diplomat observing the meeting.

The Moscow-based CIS Interstate Economic Council has not even started to function. Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Bolshakov has been nominated to head it, but some states are wary of Russian dominance and have not approved the choice.

Another obvious barrier to economic integration is the different pace of economic reform in the various CIS states, which have their own separate non-convertible currencies.

The CIS summit, in apparent deference to Russia and despite talking about peace and stability, all but ignored the war in Chechnya.

President Boris Yeltsin, who had appeared somewhat weary and unsteady on his feet on his arrival in Alma-Ata, failed to show up at the closing news conference.

Some past summits have lined up all of the heads of state to answer questions. But Mr. Yeltsin was the only one to appear at the previous gathering in Moscow and CIS protocol officials said it was normal for only the host president to face reporters.

Mr. Nazarbayev said Mr. Yeltsin had briefed the other leaders on Chechnya, where

thousands have been killed since Russia sent in troops on Dec. 11 to crush armed separatists who had been defying Moscow's leadership for three years.

But the CIS issued no statement on Chechnya, the latest in a series of ethnic conflicts which inspired the document on "peace and stability."

The memorandum, proposed by Mr. Nazarbayev, was watered down from the status of a pact. It aims to preserve integrity of frontiers and calls on members to refrain from military, political, economic or other pressure on each other.

Differences over other proposals, including joint defence of borders with non-CIS states, will be carried over to the 18th summit in the Belarusian capital Minsk on May 25-26.

Critics ask why Kremlin waited three years on Chechnya

By Jean Raffaelli
Agence France Presse

MOSCOW — Two months into Moscow's military intervention in Chechnya, Russian politicians are still puzzling over why it took the Kremlin three years to move against the Caucasus republic's independence drive.

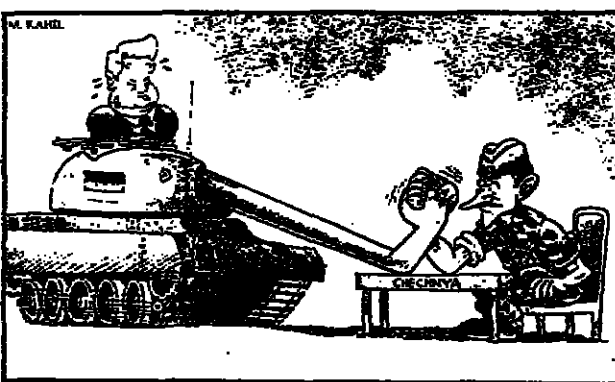
Above all, questions are being asked as to why the government opted for an exclusively military response to bring the secessionist republic to heel and why it had to choose such a brutal and large-scale operation.

Communists, led by Genadi Ziyuganov, and democrats behind former reformist premier Yegor Gaidar, have repeatedly said the government should have taken another path to resolve the issue of Chechen independence, proclaimed unilaterally in 1991.

Observers here believe several other solutions were open to Moscow apart from armed intervention.

Alternatives included sitting back and watching popular criticism of Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev grow in the face of general anarchy in the republic, as well as sealing off Chechnya and imposing an economic blockade — if necessary with military support.

A more cynical solution could have been direct action by the FSK security



services, successor of the KGB, to eliminate anti-Moscow Chechen elements. But observers are particularly puzzled by the three-year wait for action. Muscovite political analyst Boris Grishchenko said he believed that after proclaiming independence, "Dudayev served the interests of business lobbies linked more or less directly to political milieu in Moscow until last year."

Nationalist deputy Sergei Baburin also expressed this view when he told AFP in September, that "Mr. Dudayev serves certain milieus in Moscow."

However, according to Mr. Grishchenko, "pursuing collaboration with Dzhokhar Dudayev was becoming dangerous." Meanwhile, his popularity inside Chechnya was on the wane, and goods being sold to Moscow became the object of fierce rivalry be-

tween Mafia-style gangs. "At the start of 1994, there was no longer anything to pillage, thus nothing left to share out," Mr. Grishchenko said. He added that Mr. Dudayev's overthrow had by that stage become a possibility.

Other observers pointed to the fact that when Mr. Dudayev declared independence, Russian President Boris Yeltsin was locked in a power struggle with the Moscow parliament which culminated in the bloody stand-off at the legislature in October 1993.

Mr. Yeltsin had little scope to reflect on the state of play in Chechnya. Russia was then gripped by a crisis on its southern fringe, with the election in January 1994 of Yuri Meshkov as head of the pro-Russian autonomous republic of Crimea in the Ukraine, an event which threatened to scupper Rus-

sian relations with Ukraine. The crisis between Kiev and Simferopol in the Crimea escalated and threw into question the future of the strategically important Black Sea fleet, based in the Crimea.

The situation calmed down again in July with the election of Leonid Kuchma as Ukrainian president damping nationalist aspirations in the southern and western Ukraine.

It was then, in early August, that Chechen opposition supporters created the Moscow-backed Provisional Council under Umar Avturkhanov. From then on, Russia indirectly became involved in Chechnya, inspiring the opposition to try to overthrow Mr. Dudayev by providing the council with logistical help.

On Nov. 29 last year, with Mr. Dudayev still defiantly hanging on, Moscow decided to send troops in following a meeting of the Russian Security Council.

A further factor which had caused Moscow to wait until December before attacking Chechnya was uncertainty over the fate of the Russian republic of Tatarstan, which was doggedly holding out for a large degree of autonomy.

But the normalisation of links between Moscow and the Tatar capital of Kazan a year ago allowed Russia to turn its full attention to resolving the problem of Chechnya.

LETTERS

Why people write letters?

To the Editor:

UPON READING some "letters to the Editor" in the Jordan Times, I find it both interesting and frustrating that some Jordanians write to complain about an incident which happened to them in the past. Take, for example, the university student who is criticising her fellow male students for staring at her or making remarks as she passes by them, or the gentlemen who complain about the lack of police officers whom he could find to pay his JD 5 fine, and you will know what I mean.

I believe those types of letters should be addressed to the Arabic newspapers, especially since they are written by Jordanians and addressed basically to other Jordanians. I am not really sure how many University of Jordan students, for instance, read the Jordan Times or whether the various government public relation officers bother to notice readers' comments in your newspaper.

Instead of tackling real issues concerning us, I suggest that writers of such letters are only trying to be ostentatious by showing their friends that they can write letters in English and can get their names printed in a newspaper. But by doing that, these people merely giving wrong impression to our foreign guests about our beautiful people and country.

Hussam Deranicheh,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

'Saudis massing troops'

(Continued from page 1)

flag. A clash broke out with Yemeni border police, who recovered the post and ripped down the flag.

There was no official Saudi comment on the incident.

Earlier this month Yemen and Saudi Arabia agreed to halt military movements along their disputed border and pull their forces back from the area, following a series of clashes.

Tension has remained high between the two countries, whose relations deteriorated during the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis when Riyadh accused Sanaa of supporting Baghdad.

In Yemen's two-month civil war last year, Sanaa accused Riyadh of aiding southern Yemeni forces in their bid to break away from the north.

Yemen claims sovereignty over three Saudi provinces — Najran, Jizan and Assir — assigned to the kingdom under a treaty signed in 1934. Sanaa argues that the treaty expired in September 1992 and is opposed to renewing it.

The Yemeni Al Thawra weekly reported on Friday several people were killed or wounded in "wide-scale" clashes on Wednesday in which several Saudi troops

were captured. It said Saudi warplanes launched air raids on Yemeni positions.

There was no confirmation of the report by the weekly, the mouthpiece of the opposition Yemen Socialist Party (YSP).

Official Yemeni sources had said a number of Yemeni soldiers were injured in a clash on Tuesday with a Saudi force that penetrated Yemeni territory.

An official Yemeni source on Friday denied a report in the Lebanese Al Anwar paper saying that Sanaa had rushed troops to the border and that Yemeni forces held a Saudi post inside Saudi territory.

"There is no truth whatsoever in this report... there are no Yemeni troops massed on the border," he said.

Al Anwar said telephone contacts took place between King Fahd and a number of Arab leaders on Thursday and that Saudi ambassadors were briefed on the massing of Yemeni troops.

The official Saudi Press Agency said King Fahd talked on Thursday with President Assad and President Mubarak and discussed "political and security developments on the Arab and international arena."

Chechens hold onto palace

(Continued from page 1)

of Russia, Mr. Clinton said "the violence must end."

"I call again on all the parties to stop spilling blood and start making peace," he added.

Grozny has been subjected to air raids as well as relentless artillery bombardment, with Minutka Square, a rallying point for Chechen combatants in the south of the

city, hit by about a dozen bombs which killed at least three people and injured five more on Saturday, photographer on the scene said.

But victory was still not in sight for the Russians, more than a month after they were sent to put down the three-year-old rebellion in the secessionist republic.

Jerusalem should not cause disunity

(Continued from page 1)

over this issue since the Kingdom has no ambitions or objectives other than protection of the Arab and Islamic identity of the Holy City," he added.

"Participation in the OIC (Jerusalem Committee) meeting manifests Jordan's determination to present its position with regard to the status of the Holy City," Mr. Mbeideen said.

Stressing that Jordan seeks to safeguard the holy shrines, Mr. Mbeideen recalled that Jordan had been acting as guardian of these places over the past five decades and undertook many measures, including the restoration of

the Dome of the Rock Mosque, in order to achieve that goal.

The Jerusalem Committee will give attention to efforts being made at all levels to ensure Arab sovereignty over Arab Jerusalem, to protect its Islamic character and to secure the rights of all followers of the monotheistic religions, Mr. Mbeideen said.

The Jerusalem Committee, which was formed by OIC in 1975, has been entrusted with implementing resolutions passed by OIC and other international organisations which support OIC's stand, Mr. Mbeideen noted.

Movement takes shape

(Continued from page 1)

lements have also boosted efforts to organise Palestinian ranks.

Dr. Abdul Shafi's call coincided with parallel, albeit uncoordinated, efforts to revive the PLO.

The new initiative to revive the PLO is led by Palestinian Foreign Minister Farouk Kaddoumi, who met with Palestinian opposition groups in Damascus last week.

Mr. Kaddoumi, a member of the Fatah Central Committee, even met with Khaled Al Fahum, leader of the National Salvation Front, and Ahmad Jibril of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP-GC), who were accused in the past of attempting to create an alternative organisation to the PLO.

According to sources from the opposition Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Mr. Kaddoumi has pledged to join in the call for the suspending the peace talks.

But other Palestinian sources are not optimistic about the success of these efforts, especially that most of the PLO leadership institutions have been defunct since PLO leader Yasser Arafat moved to the Gaza Strip last July.

Following are excerpts from Dr. Abdul Shafi's draft proposal:

... A movement for building democracy is needed... to practise its role initially among the people in the occupied territories.

The movement's political identity is based on the following:

— Commitment to the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on Palestinian land and the attainment of the Palestinian people's rights in accordance with United Nations resolutions.

— The movement reiterates the unity of the Palestinian people and that the PLO is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and the symbol of their unity.

— The movement considers the continuation of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands — the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank including East Jerusalem — and settlement construction as a blatant aggression condemned by the United Nations Security Council resolutions. They are serious obstacles to peace in the region.

— The movement is committed to the peace initiative launched by the Palestine National Council (PNC) in Algiers on Nov. 15, 1988, and to Palestinian refugees' rights according to United Nations Resolution 194.

— The movement rejects any Israeli territorial claims in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, and considers the construction and settlement of Israelis in that area illegal and in total contravention of the requirements of peace.

— The movement considers the continuation of Israeli claims as a flagrant call for violence and a distortion of the concept of peace. The movement holds Israel responsible for the violence that results as a consequence of the Israeli policies — whether it is Palestinian or Israeli violence.

— On the basis of the commitments mentioned above the Movement for Democracy is open for all individuals who believe and adhere to democracy and work to disseminate democratic values and practices in the Palestinian society. The movement is not ready to compromise its independent identity.



Palestinian youths clash with an Israeli military police unit after the Friday noon prayer as they were prevented from holding a demonstration in the Arab village of El Khader against the widening of the settlement of Ephrat (AFP photo)

Self-rule deal could die of irrelevance

With continuing violence and stalemate over Jewish settlements, Rabin may have run out of ideas, Derek Brown in Jerusalem writes

IT HAS been a dreadful week for the Israeli government and for the peace accord with the Palestinians. Eleven lives have been taken, and trust between the so-called peace partners is as low as it has been — possibly as low as it can get without the whole process disintegrating.

The gloom is not just the product of a particularly grim week, but of the accumulated disillusion on both sides with an arrangement which has promised much and delivered dangerously little.

Some of the Palestinians have freedom of a sort, but it is the freedom of the ghetto. Within the self-rule enclaves of Jericho and the Gaza Strip, their borders guarded by Israeli troops, poverty is increasing. In the rest of the West Bank, still under military occupation, there is burning resentment about the remorseless expansion of Jewish settlements.

From the other side of the 1967 border, the view is not better. Rightwing Israelis were appalled by the very idea of peace with Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Even liberals were apprehensive. Now everyone is sated with the almost daily reports of death. More than 100 Israelis have been killed since the signing

of the "historic" peace accord in September 1993, the bloodiest toll by far since the start of the Arab intifada, or uprising, in late 1987.

Last week's dead, 10 Palestinians and one Israeli, sustain the ratio of the intifada. But over recent months it has been much more balanced. That fact is chilling in a country obsessed by threat and survival.

Over the past 15 months of "peace", Islamist groups like Hamas and others opposed to the accord have hit civilian and security force targets more efficiently than ever before. Now even Mr. Arafat's raggedy police force seems to be joining in.

Last week's corpses include three Palestinian policemen, killed by Israeli troops at Beit Hanoun inside the northern border of the autonomous Gaza Strip. The army says categorically that the police fired first; the Palestinians insist that they did not fire at all.

As ever, what is believed is much more important than what can be proved. The conventional wisdom in Gaza today is that Israel deliberately launched a lethal attack to divert attention from its own obstruction of the peace process.

For an increasing number of Israelis, the affray at Beit

Hanoun is evidence of the essential untrustworthiness of Mr. Arafat and the PLO. Instead of neutralising the militant threat, the argument runs, self-rule has dramatically increased it.

There have been signs for some time that the government and security forces are losing patience with the Palestinians' failure to deliver on security. Last autumn, in the wake of the Islamist suicide bombing of a bus in Tel Aviv, which claimed more than 20 Israeli lives, the gloves came off. At least one Islamist activist was assassinated in Gaza, and undercover operations were stepped up.

Last week brought dramatic evidence of the new, no-nonsense approach. On Monday, hours before the Beit Hanoun shooting, troops intercepted and shot dead three Hamas militants in two separate incidents in the West Bank. Four activists of the Popular Front were cornered in Ramallah also and, as the military analysts say, "eliminated".

There should be nothing inevitable about the response, but there always is a response. Recently, a woman settler died when her car was attacked by gunmen near Ramallah. Her brother-in-law was wounded. Two small girls

were in the vehicle. Neither was hurt.

The latest attack has brutally underlined the government's dilemma over Jewish colonisation of the West Bank, an issue which has suddenly jumped to the top of the "peace" agenda after months of muted Palestinian grumbling and casual Israeli reassurances.

The government is adamant that settlements can be discussed only when the time comes to negotiate a final-status agreement. In the meantime, it says, there will be no new public sector building, and no new settlements.

The reality is that settlements are growing, Jews are moving into the West Bank, land is being confiscated, and new roads are being constructed. All of this has gone on behind a smokescreen of legalistic guff about "state" land, private sector activity, security considerations, existing permits, and so on. What matters are facts on the ground, and those facts are humiliating for West Bank Palestinians.

After a recent violent clash on the site of yet another settlement expansion near Bethlehem, and the government's subsequent attempt at "compromise" (the site was moved and building is going ahead), Palestinians and settlers are talking themselves into a potentially ugly new confrontation.

Demonstrations, backed by peace groups and sections of the Israeli left, were planned at several building sites. In response, the more militant settlers are talking of taking defence into their own hands, and bitterly accusing the government of giving in to violence.

(Nothing about this is comic, but there have been surreal moments. Such as Eliakim Ha'etzi, one of the shriller settlers from the ultra-right community of Kiryat Arba, complaining about Palestinians "grabbing our land".)

Against this background of confrontation, it is perhaps unsurprising that there has been little progress on the next scheduled phase of the peace process: pulling Israeli troops out of Arab areas and extending self-rule into the occupied West Bank as a prelude to Palestinian elections. But therein lies the greatest danger of all, that without forward momentum the accord will atrophy and die of sheer irrelevance.

"We have moved from the siege of Beirut to the siege of Gaza," said the Palestinian National Authority spokesman, Nabil Abu Rudeina, last week. "We expected Israel to redeploy its troops; instead it

Pakistan's mighty Khan

LAHORE — HE is mobbed wherever he goes. People want to touch him. Schoolchildren happily line up to give him their pocket money, women fling their jewellery at him, small traders and businessmen have raised billions of rupees for his cause. His rallies get bigger and more stirring by the day. Rousing slogans proclaim him as the next prime minister of Pakistan.

He is Imran Khan, a former captain of Pakistan's cricket team, who shot to glory after Pakistan won cricket's World Cup in 1992. These days Mr. Khan is raising money for a cancer hospital for the poor in memory of his mother, who died of the disease. More worryingly for Pakistan's political leaders, the prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, and the opposition's Nawaz Sharif, he has become a

popular icon.

Until recently, the Oxford-educated Mr. Khan wore Armani suits, dated London socialites and rubbed shoulders with royalty and rock stars. Now he has turned his back on all that. Clad in traditional Pakistani shalwar kameez, he claims the West is immoral, depraved, hypocritical and imperialist. He accuses Pakistani ruling elites of being heartless and corrupt. There is talk of forming a welfare party or pressure group to address the plight of the "wretched of the earth".

To Pakistanis the new Imran Khan is noble (he comes from a noble line of Pathans), truthful (he admitted that he had once "tampered" with the ball in a county cricket match), selfless (cancer hospital for the poor), independent (he is critical of all politicians

and parties) and homespun (the refuses to wear Western clothes and frowns on Western music). He soaks up class children for aspiring to become "brown sahibs". He insists that his hospital will not become dependent on handouts from the rich or the powerful. His populist rhetoric evokes standing ovations across the country.

Mr. Khan's stardom springs partly from people's discontent with Pakistan's corrupt political leadership. It also reflects strong undercurrents of anti-Western feeling among many sections of state and society. How has this come about?

Since Pakistan reverted to democracy in 1988, the country has been plagued by recurring constitutional crises, bitter palace intrigues and acute political instability. Five governments

have come and gone, three elections have taken place. Every regime, at national and state level, has faced charges of corruption, embezzlement and plunder. The same landed elites which propped up military regimes in the past now hog the power under democracy.

Benazir Bhutto has turned out to be a disappointment. Jobs are harder to find, inflation is soaring (over 20 per cent unofficially), law and order has rapidly deteriorated and sectarianism (financed by Saudi Arabia and Iran) is rife. Ethnic conflict has paralysed the country's largest industrial city, Karachi, where more than 800 people (including 70 policemen) were killed by terrorists in 1994.

The economy is slack. For the third year running, growth is expected to be lower than the 6 per cent average for the 1980s. Many industries, including cotton (the country's top foreign-exchange earner) and sugar, are in bad shape. Since March, the Karachi Stock Exchange index has declined 727 points to 1936 points in December.

The country is steadily drifting into a pro-Islam, anti-West mood. Pakistanis felt betrayed when the United States, a staunch ally for over four decades, cut off economic and military aid in 1990 in retaliation for Pakistan's refusal to abandon its nuclear programme. Lack of Western support for the cause of Muslims in Kashmir and Bosnia is seen as part of the West's "new crusade against Islam".

In this atmosphere of despair and drift many people find themselves yearning for a saviour to provide security, stability and self-respect. Can the born-again Muslim Imran Khan take on this role? For the moment, Mr. Khan is insisting that he is not interested in politics because he finds it "contemptible". But he admits that General Hamid Gul is his mentor and made a momin (the rightly guided).

General Gul was head of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence agency when the Afghan war was at its peak. He is an aggressive self-proclaimed "Islamic visionary" who has been touring the country exhorting people to demand the liberation of Kashmir by force from India. The danger to Pakistan is that the "mighty Khan" (as he is fondly called) might become a pawn in the hands of such demagogues.

The Economist.

Clinton touts economic record

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton turned his attention Monday from legislative battles and attacks against his latest cabinet nominee to his rosiest record on the economic front.

"This economic report is an important milestone for me. It measures our success in fulfilling the mission that I brought to this presidency," Mr. Clinton said in an Oval Office ceremony releasing his annual report on the state of the economy to Congress.

"I ran for this office to help restore the American dream and to guarantee its availability for all Americans into the 21st century," he said, noting the report showed strong growth, low inflation and a widening employment base.

Mr. Clinton also announced a 90 cent raise in the \$4.25 per hour minimum wage over two years, fulfilling the pledge he made after his party's defeat in November legislative elections to try to give blue collar workers a share of the economic recovery.

The shift in focus to the economy comes as Mr. Clinton is embroiled in a battle over changes the Republican-controlled Congress wants to make in his cherished crime bill and a volatile debate over his surgeon general nominee, Henry Foster.

"The president is doing a lot of things that are related to promoting America's economic interest both here at

home and abroad," White House spokesman Michael McCurry said earlier.

But the administration's economic policies and the proposed wage hike are also under fire.

Republicans in Congress have vowed to vote down the minimum wage increase and have complained that Mr. Clinton's \$1.61 trillion budget for fiscal 1996 does not contain enough spending cuts.

Mr. Clinton defended his financial plan, challenging Republicans to match his deficit cutting efforts.

"Now they're in the majority, it's their turn," he said. "If they don't like my budget, let's see what theirs is."

They've made promises that would make the deficit bigger."

The president spent the day closeted with business leaders and state treasurers to discuss the countries' finances and held his first meeting of the President's Export Council.

The panel, which consists of 28 private sector business leaders, lawmakers and White House officials, advises the president on export policy.

"I think it's one of the signature elements of this administration that we base our fight for increasing exports abroad in the context of our overall foreign policy," Mr. McCurry said.

China high on list as OECD widens work on Asian economies

PARIS (AFP) — The OECD is to work over the next few months on building bridges between its industrial members and other present and future major players in the world economy, with China high on the list, OECD sources said.

The Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), criticised by the United States and some other non-European members last year for its alleged "Eurocentricism," is also taking a special interest in India, another potential future economic giant.

At the same time, it is further upgrading the "dialogue" it began in 1989 with the Dynamic Asian Economies (DAEs), expanded in 1993 to include key Latin American countries.

The increased emphasis on China was reconfirmed last June when the organisation's annual ministerial meeting decided the OECD should continue to broaden its "knowledge and understanding" of China and explore the possibilities of dialogue and

cooperation with the fast-growing economy.

Two events with a direct bearing on trade and economic relations with China highlights a tight schedule of meetings, workshops and seminars on non-member economies planned over the next three months by the OECD or its research affiliate, the OECD Development Centre.

First, the OECD secretariat's finance and trade directorates have prepared the ground for an informal workshop on "Trade and investment linkages with China," scheduled to be held in Paris on March 2-3.

Second, the Development Centre hopes to organise, together with a Chinese institution, a meeting in Beijing towards the end of April to review progress made in converting China's military industry into commercial production units turning out goods for civilian use.

In addition, a high-level OECD mission will visit China within the foreseeable future, although OECD officials say no formal decision has as yet been made as to

the timing.

The idea of such a trip by a team of top OECD officials was proposed when the OECD countries held a high-level meeting in Tokyo last October with the countries known in OECD jargon as the Dynamic Non-Member Economies (DNMEs), and won the support of Staffan Sohlman, the Swedish diplomat who was acting as OECD secretary general at the time.

The March 2-3 meeting in Paris, which may be attended by a Chinese team although this has still to be confirmed, will focus in particular on Chinese policies on trade and foreign direct investment (FDI).

The event coincides with a continuing trade row between Beijing and Washington and an ongoing dispute over China's bid to become a founder member of the new World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The planned Beijing meeting on Chinese military industry conversion will be organised jointly by the Development Centre and the

Chinese Commission of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence (COSTIND).

The talks will be based on a study of Chinese enterprises carried out on the basis of previously unpublished material, sources at the centre said.

The Chinese process "has had some success but needs to go further" and will require cooperation with foreign partners, notably at the levels of finance and technology, according to these sources.

Participants will be able to compare China's experience with that of Russia, which has been less successful. Russian officials are expected to attend along with teams from international bodies such as the World Bank, the same sources said.

On March 6-7, the Development Centre will cosponsor with India's Centre for Policy research a meeting in New Delhi on the Indian experience in policy reforms to boost structural change and competitiveness.

1992 parallels seen

Sterling slumps to two-year lows

LONDON (R) — Sterling slumped to its lowest against the mark for two years Tuesday amid concern about inflation, slowing growth and Prime Minister John Major's political problems.

Some analysts said there could be a rerun of the economic and market conditions that culminated in "black Wednesday" in 1992 when the pound crashed out of the European exchange rate mechanism (ERM) because of a conflict of government policy.

The 1992 crisis stemmed from the fundamental conflict between the low level of interest rates needed to dig the economy out of its longest recession since the 1930s and the high level needed to keep sterling up and within its ERM bands.

Now, Chancellor of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke faces a similar dilemma with an election looking before

April 1997.

"We are seeing the same set of conditions now that we saw around black Wednesday," said Nick Parsons, head of treasury advisory group at Canadian bank CIBC Wood Gundy.

"We are seeing an equally fundamental conflict between the level of growth that is necessary for Clarke to hit his inflation target and the level of growth that is necessary for the government to be reelected," Mr. Parsons added.

Sterling plunged more than 18 per cent in the aftermath of the 1992 crisis to an all-time low of 2.3147 marks, and this level is in sight again after the pound dropped below its 1994 floor of 2.3710 marks. Around midday Tuesday it was trading at 2.3640 marks.

There is also the same element of the market targeting certain levels, analysts said.

This time the target was the 1994 low just as the pound's ERM floor of 2.7780 marks was on black Wednesday. The next target will obviously be the all-time low.

Mr. Clarke is aiming at a core inflation rate of 2.5 per cent or below by the time of the next election but rising prices at the factory gate call this into question. January's core inflation index is due to be published Wednesday and is forecast by analysts at 2.8 per cent, well above the chancellor's target.

Meanwhile, growth is slowing, an industry survey Tuesday showing flat consumer demand and figures showing a nine per cent drop in new construction orders in the last three months only served to hammer the pound lower.

Since becoming chancellor in mid-1993, Mr. Clarke has had an easy ride with the pound's devaluation prompting a surge in exports and

pushing growth to levels not seen since the boom of the late 1980s. He took over from Norman Lamont who was basically sacked because of the black Wednesday debacle.

But this is fast becoming Mr. Clarke's first real test, analysts said. Last year he had it easy, pushing up rates to stem inflation when the economy was growing strongly, but now the question is whether he has the nerve to increase rates again given the clear evidence of economic slowdown.

This dilemma could spell the end of the cosy relationship between Mr. Clarke and Bank of England Governor "steady" Eddie George, a well-known inflation hawk. A bank/treasury split would hit confidence hard, particularly that of overseas investors, and would send the pound reeling, analysts said.

Iraq hikes travel tax

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqis wanting to travel abroad must pay a tax of 100,000 dinars, or \$133 at the unofficial rate, compared with \$62 previously, the daily Al Jumhuriya reported here Tuesday.

Iraqis aged under 18 pay 60,000 dinars (\$92) in tax, the paper said, quoting an official at the General Directorate of Emigration.

It is the second hike in the travel tax since it was first imposed in May 1993 at a level of 15,000 dinars (\$23). A few months later it was raised to 40,000 dinars (\$62).

The average monthly salary in Iraq is about 3,000 dinars. The tax is aimed at halting devaluation of the Iraqi dinar by reducing the demand for dollars provoked by the foreign travel.

The dinar is worth \$3.2 at the official rate, but the greenback is traded for 600 dinars in banks and 650 dinars on the parallel market.

The four-year U.N. embargo has triggered rampant inflation and deprived Iraq of its oil income, which used to account for more than 90 per cent of its overall revenues.

Tourism earns India \$1.6b

NEW DELHI (AFP) — A record 1.8 million tourists visited India last year despite a plague epidemic in September which led to many countries suspending air and sea links, the government has said. A record number of 220,000 tourists visited the country in December alone and total earnings for 1994 were \$1.6 billion, a climb of 11.6 per cent over the previous year when 1.7 million tourists visited India.

The upsurge in tourist arrivals was mainly due to the concerted efforts made by the department of tourism, state governments, and the travel, trade and hotel industry," the statement said.

Sri Lankan premier to fight against privatisation

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lankan Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike condemned the World Bank's privatisation prescriptions and publicly opposed the sale of profit-making state enterprises, a state-run daily reported Monday. Ms. Bandaranaike opposed in principle the privatisation of any public commercial venture and declared that the World Bank was advising the government to privatise "not with any love for Sri Lanka," the evening Observer said.

The newspaper said the premier pledged to fight in parliament against privatisation, a policy strongly advocated by her daughter, President Chandrika Kumaratunga.

Ms. Kumaratunga in her maiden policy statement to

parliament on Jan. 6 announced a sweeping privatisation programme aimed at selling off key state-run service, including aviation, transport and insurance. She said her new government would also end the state monopoly on power generation and hand over infrastructure development projects to the private sector.

In sharp contrast to her daughter's policy, Mr. Bandaranaike recalled how she resisted pressure from the World Bank and nationalised petroleum distribution run by foreign multinationals in the 1960s. "The (state-run) Petroleum Corp. has now become a leading profit-making institution in the country," Ms. Bandaranaike said.

Pakistan to complete privatisation of industrial units this year

KARACHI (AFP) — The Pakistani government plans to sell all state-owned industrial plants this year to complete its privatisation programme, officials say.

So far 94 out of 118 public-sector factories and corporations have been put up for auction and the remaining 25 units will be offered in the near future, Privatisation Commission Chairman Naveed Qamar told AFP.

In addition to automobile, cement, fertilizer and chemical plants the government will also sell two thermal-power generation plants for the first time, the officials said.

The privatisation includes both total disinvestment

through open bidding and partial disinvestment in the case of large-scale manufacturing and services.

About 70 public-sector units, including two banks, have been privatised since the process was initiated in 1988 under then Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

Privatisation went into high gear during the term of premier Nawaz Sharif, now an opposition leader, during his 1990-93 stint in office.

However, the privatisation drive has been a focus of controversy, both now and when Mr. Sharif was in power.

Both sides have accused each other of committing irregularities. In some cases

trade-union activists went to the court but their pleas for stopping privatisation have been rejected.

The Bhutto government last month arrested for alleged bidding fraud a former chairman of the Privatisation Commission, retired general Saeed Qadir, along with Mian Riaz Shah, chairman of plastic-pipe maker Pakistan PVC, who bought one of the units.

The arrest of the Pakistan PVC chief angered the business community, which threatened to boycott the privatisation if he were not released.

The business people have also expressed concern over the "slow" pace of privatisation.

Ms. Bhutto, who is again prime minister, has pledged full accountability in privatisation and reconstituted the Privatisation Commission in November, a month after assuming office.

The government has moved to privatise the telecommunications network, which has assets of more than \$9 billion. Telecommunications services for sensitive institutions such as the army are to remain in state control.

About 12 per cent of the shares of Pakistan Telecommunication Corporation (PTC) have been sold to the public in the form of vouchers.

THE Daily Crossword by Bernice Gordon

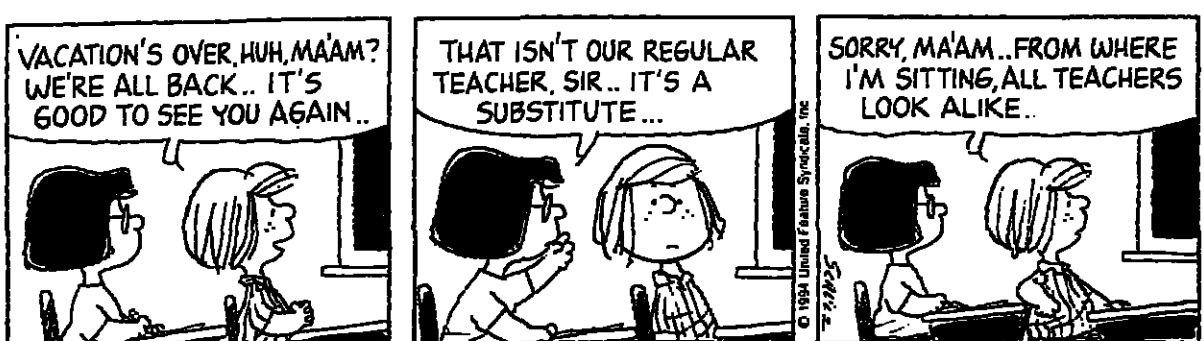
ACROSS

- 1 Mine excavation of a kind
- 8 Street
- 10 City in England
- 14 Was wearing
- 15 Code of
- 16 Repeat
- 17 Concerning
- 18 Follower
- 20 Tropical cyclone
- 22 — code
- 23 Legal doctrine
- 24 Field test
- 25 Delicate hue
- 28 Assistant
- 30 Countermeasure
- 31 Canadian peninsula
- 32 Hurry
- 36 Get through a
- 40 Bill
- 41 Egg-shaped
- 42 Asian mountain range
- 43 Follow orders
- 44 Inch
- 46 Nonseasonal task
- 48 Egyptian queen, briefly
- 51 Holce
- 52 Heavy compounds
- 57 Song by Irving
- 58 Specialized vocabulary
- 60 Dobb's share
- 61 Israeli airline
- 62 Josie
- 63 Nachweiser
- 64 Soldier
- 65 Nivvies

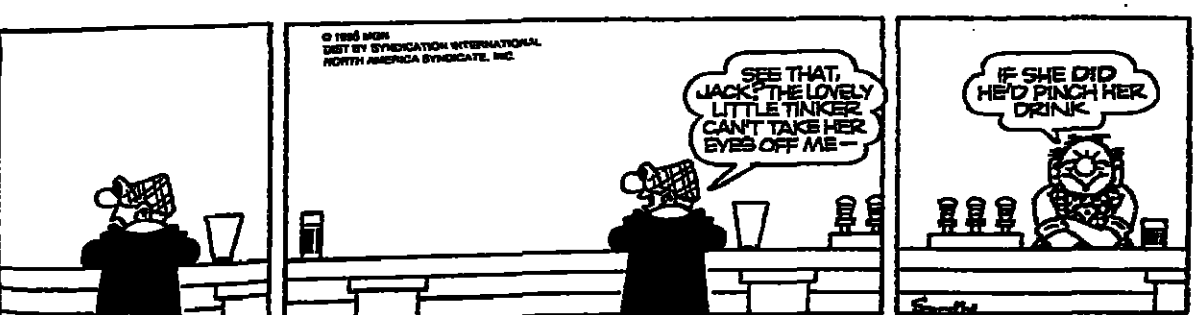
DOWN

- 1 Pasture title
- 2 Barred
- 3 Fragrance
- 4 Decent
- 5 Total
- 6 Port in Brazil
- 7 Pure air
- 8 Confident
- 9 Sea bird
- 10 "Try will"
- 11 Thick-walled nut
- 12 The things here
- 13 Washed down
- 18 Organic compounds
- 21 — de-sec
- 24 Bubble-bubble
- 25 Chestman
- 26 Opposite of
- 27 Awe
- 28 Wee one
- 29 Wimbledon winner, once
- 31 Overcast
- 32 Lawyer: abbr.
- 33 Burrow
- 34 Asian land
- 35 Give out
- 37 Temple
- 38 Balanced
- 39 Highland
- 40 headscarf
- 43 Hidesome woman
- 44 Hat with a tassel
- 45 Weezy
- 46 Tim on a blouse
- 47 Closer to lie
- 48 Way
- 49 Cloudless
- 50 Cotton thread
- 52 B lamp
- 53 Together, musically
- 54 Go by bus
- 55 Go to the
- 58 Capt. Hook's side
- 59 London district

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DENEY
SATHY
YOSSIF
ZEERIF

Answer: HIS

Yesterday's Jumbles: BATON FAMED SLOUCH BOILED
Answer: What was the boss' relationship with his bookkeeper? — HE COUNTED ON HIM

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 15, 1995
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Discuss with allies how mutual projects can be improved. Try to understand better what they have on their minds. Sit down this evening and write to those who have data you require.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Keep busy with financial affairs that are important to your welfare now. Listen to what a professional has to say that will be helpful to you and reflect on it this evening.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) State your aims to the right people today and bring forth from them the assistance you want that will make you a more successful person.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You are able to handle those personal matters today with relative ease provided you start on them early. An attachment is most affectionate this evening.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Concentrate on social activities this PM and plan for future events. Your private affairs need to be taken care of without delay. Show that you are an interesting and energetic person.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) See what you can do to have a more pleasing image, both in private and public life. Improve your career via the civic platform. Mix tonight with people of all types and make a new friend.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) New conditions are at work that will give you an opportunity for greater benefits and favours than you have had in a long time. This evening is good for both private and public activities.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) There are responsibilities that must be handled immediately or you get into deeper hot water later on. Once these are completed much happiness with mate is possible.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You can work out deals now for longtime agreements with associates. First let them state their views and then you can say your piece. Go out for dinner later on.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You can make this a productive and happy day provided that you first come to a meeting of the minds with fellow associates. Later, consult with one who can help you with health matters.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You desire entertainment which is all right provided you get some tasks out of the way first. Later, use your creative talent with vim and vigor.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) If you show your willingness to help solve problems at home today, much harmony can result by early evening. Plan how to get that project in the business world rolling.

Birthstone of February: Amethyst — Onyx

Antique violin stolen from teenage prodigy

LONDON (AFP) — A 16-year-old music prodigy has stolen a \$200,000 antique violin from his home in London.

The violin, a 17th-century Stradivari, was stolen from the home of the prodigy's parents, who are both professional musicians.

The prodigy, who is a member of the London Symphony Orchestra, is said to be a very talented player and has won several international competitions.

The police are looking for the thief, who is described as a young man, about 16 years old, with dark hair and a slim build.

The violin was stolen from a room in the family home, which is located in a quiet residential area of London.

The prodigy's parents are both well-known musicians and have been instrumental in his development as a violinist.

The stolen violin is one of the most valuable instruments in the world and is said to be a masterpiece of craftsmanship.

The police are offering a reward of up to £10,000 for information that leads to the recovery of the violin.

The prodigy's parents are said to be very distressed by the theft and are hoping that the violin will be found soon.

The prodigy himself is said to be very upset by the loss of his instrument and is currently taking a break from playing.

The police are currently conducting a search of the area and have asked anyone who has seen anything suspicious to contact them.

The prodigy's parents are also looking for anyone who might have seen the violin being stolen or who might have information about the thief.

The prodigy is said to be a very private person and does not like to be in the spotlight.

The stolen violin is said to be a very rare instrument and is worth a fortune.

The prodigy's parents are said to be very proud of their son's talent and are hoping that he will continue to play and win more competitions.

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business daily beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Egyptian wins half of lottery's first prize

According to knowledgeable sources, JD 50,000, which represents half of the New Year's first prize of Jordan's national lottery, went to an Egyptian worker. The General Union of Voluntary Societies which issues the monthly lottery is still waiting for the holder of the other half of the prize to come forward and show the ticket. Rumours say the co-winner could be another Egyptian who might have left the country (Jordan Times).

Frozen chicken with a Feb. 15 expiry date will be distributed to consumers this week at 800 fils per kilogram. Chicken was selling previously at JD 1.160 a kilogram (Al Aswaq).

The Industrial Cities Corporation considers establishing a new industrial city in Karak in cooperation with Mut'a University. The project will be financed by the Japanese aid to the Kingdom (Al Dustour).

The privatisation of the Jordan Electricity Authority has been postponed until March 1995. The privatisation was scheduled to begin this month (Sawt Al Shaab).

The oil tanker Jordan had purchased to import oil from Yemen during the Gulf crisis is to be sold. The tanker, which has been used for many years to ship oil from Yemen and was leased to an international oil transport company, carries a JD 2.5 million price tag (Sawt Al Shaab).

Jordan Export Development and Trade Centres Corporation received 65 invitations to participate in local and international fairs during 1995 (Al Aswaq).

Electrical power generated last year was 4,676 kilowatt/hour, compared to 4,389 kilowatt/hour in 1993, including electric power given to Syria in each of these years. As such, the growth in the power generated for local usage was 7.7 per cent. The peak load reached 794 megawatts in 1994, compared to 717 megawatts in 1993 (Al Shaab).

Based on an approval from the Ministry of Labour, an association of traders in electrical and electronic equipment was set up on Jan. 9, 1995. The founders are calling on all interested traders to attend a meeting at the Amman Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday (Jan. 17, at 4 p.m.) (Al Ra'i).

The ministry of supply demanded the payment of a JD 220,000 guarantee after the agent, Qalaji Bros. Trading, failed to supply 26,000 tonnes of sugar to the ministry (Al Dustour).

The board of directors of the Irbid District Electricity Company decided to give all the workers a JD 10 personal allowance a month starting this month. The workers had their salaries and the other allowances increased last June (Al Dustour).

The Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company announced a tender for the supply of 100,000 gas cylinders. Last day for accepting offers is Feb. 26, 1995 (Al Ra'i).

The 1995 budget for the Civil Aviation Authority amounts to JD 5.5 million. Capital spending was 91.6 per cent of the '94 budget (Al Ra'i).

In the past few years about 400 violations were recorded for illegal drilling of water wells. Most of the violations were in the Azraq area (Al Ra'i).

Lebanon's treasury bonds lose glitter

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanese treasury bonds — the stars of the country's financial recovery in 1993 and 1994 — are losing their glitter in 1995.

Weekly subscriptions to the high-interest bonds, which sometimes topped 300 billion Lebanese liras (\$180 million) in 1994, have slumped as low as 64 billion (\$39 million) this year according to central bank figures.

The bank now faces weekly deficits of new subscriptions against maturities of up to 70 billion liras (\$42 million), financial sources say.

Since treasury bonds are the main investment instrument in Lebanon, their popularity drop has sharply reduced the interest of Lebanon in holding onto the local currency.

In a reversal of last year's trend, when investors flocked by 20 per cent interest rates and a steadily appreciating pound sold hoarded dollars to buy treasury bonds, Lebanese are now hanging onto their dollars or even buying more.

The bonds, which have been the government's main instrument for financing huge budget deficit caused by ambitious reconstruction spending, contributed to an inflow of foreign capital.

The inflow helped the Lebanese lira appreciate against the dollar in 1993 by more than seven per cent and by nearly four per cent in 1994, in what many bankers see as the main achievement of billionaire Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri.

But dealers say the

Lebanese are no longer selling dollars to buy pounds. "There are no fresh sellers of dollars in the market and there is commercial demand for dollars," said Talal Abou Zaki, foreign exchange manager at Bank of Beirut and the Arab countries.

"There is a net tendency to buy dollars, though not too big amounts. The central bank is selling dollars indirectly through other banks," he said.

Beirut bankers and financial sources plot the decline of the Lebanese treasury bond and concerns about the lira to two factors.

In the wake of Lebanon's successful Eurobond issue of \$400 million, monetary authorities last October let lira rates fall to help reduce the treasury's snowballing debt servicing burden caused by the massive treasury bond issues.

Rates crashed in November to 12.37 per cent for three-month bills and 14.86 for two-year bills, coinciding with a worldwide rise in U.S. dollar rates. A 15-point spread between dollar and Lebanese lira rates suddenly narrowed drastically.

"When the gap between the dollar and local currency rates shrank to four per cent, people realised it's not worth taking the risk (to be in Lebanese liras)," a financial source said.

That feeling was rammed home in December by a sudden drop in political confidence when Premier Hariri, architect of Lebanon's reconstruction, said he was resigning because opponents were blocking his projects.

AMMAN — The Arab Potash Company (APC) increased its exports by more than 10 per cent of 1.5 million tonnes in 1994 as the international market for potash picked after a period of stagnation and uncertain prices, company officials said Saturday.

They said the company expected to increase its production to 1.7 million tonnes in 1995, slightly below the full production capacity because of maintenance work at its production facilities on the shore of the Dead Sea.

The officials said APC also expected higher profits in 1995 in view of what one of

them described as an upward swing in demand and thus prices since mid-1994.

The company raised its annual installed production capacity to 1.8 million with the commissioning in June 1994 of a 400,000-tonne-per-year new plant, the first phase of an expansion programme that aims at an annual production capacity of 2.2 million tonnes by 1998.

The company produced 1.55 million tonnes in 1994 and exported 1.15 million tonnes. The turnover of the company was JD 128 million in 1993, and net profits were JD 24 million compared with JD 22 million in 1993, JD 28 million in 1992 and JD 38 million in 1991.

Among the major importers of APC outputs are India, which bought 300,000 tonnes in 1994, China (200,000 tonnes), Indonesia (200,000 tonnes) and Malaysia (140,000 tonnes). Other clients include Korea, Japan, the Philippines, New Zealand, Vietnam, Taiwan, Sri Lanka and Australia.

APC prices favour Asian and Far Eastern buyers because of a \$20 advantage in freight; the average landed cost for a tonne of potash in Asia and the Far East is around \$110 while it is \$130 in Europe.

Canada leads the world in potash production and exports.

The Arab Potash Company has already signed contracts

to supply 600,000 tonnes in 1995. The deals need to be finalised with definite prices, the officials said.

"We are seeing a significant improvement in the international market for potash since mid-1994, and we expect prices to continue to go up in 1995," said a senior official of the company.

The official said the company expected an increase of \$4 per tonne in the first half of 1995 and another \$4 per tonne in the second half, as the republics in ex-Soviet Union cut back on their production.

Dumping by producers in some of the ex-Soviet republics in the transition from a single entity to individual countries — with experienced market strategists making way to politicians — was widely blamed for the stagnation in prices that the interna-

tional potash market witnessed in 1992-93.

Reports say that producers in the republics have now realised that they suffered heavy losses from haphazard exports and have cut down on production as they ponder new marketing strategies.

The APC floated a fresh issue in 1994 and raised its capital to JD 83.31 million from JD 72.45 million and used about JD 35 million it collected in premiums to finance its expansion projects.

The government of Jordan is the majority shareholder in the company. Other equity owners include the Social Security Corporation, the Arab Mining Company and the governments of Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Libya and the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank as well as the private sector.

are turning to the former Soviet Union and its previous communist allies in East Europe.

The conference followed several similar meetings between the GCC and the West.

But such meetings have produced no concrete results as Western investors seem not to want to commit themselves to major projects in the area because of its limited market potential.

No official figures are available on Western investments in the GCC but those by Japan are estimated at around \$3.5 billion, a fraction of its worldwide assets of nearly \$386 billion.

Foreign investors have also complained about restrictions on ownership of projects in GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE. Despite their liberal economic policies, the six states still stipulate foreign investors must have at least 49 per cent local partnership.

"There are \$170 billion in liquidity inside the GCC countries. But these countries do not know how to invest such funds," Mr. Harithi said. "They need technology and need to think well in order to invest their own funds instead of seeking Japanese or American liquidity."

He said Japanese investors appeared to prefer neighbouring China, South Korea, Thailand and Malaysia while Europe and the United States

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Arab Potash Company hikes exports by 10%

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

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The company raised its annual installed production capacity to 1.8 million with the commissioning in June 1994 of a 400,000-tonne-per-year new plant, the first phase of an expansion programme that aims at an annual production capacity of 2.2 million tonnes by 1998.

The company produced 1.55 million tonnes in 1994 and exported 1.15 million tonnes. The turnover of the company was JD 128 million in 1993, and net profits were JD 24 million compared with JD 22 million in 1993, JD 28 million in 1992 and JD 38 million in 1991.

Among the major importers of APC outputs are India, which bought 300,000 tonnes in 1994, China (200,000 tonnes), Indonesia (200,000 tonnes) and Malaysia (140,000 tonnes). Other clients include Korea, Japan, the Philippines, New Zealand, Vietnam, Taiwan, Sri Lanka and Australia.

APC prices favour Asian and Far Eastern buyers because of a \$20 advantage in freight; the average landed cost for a tonne of potash in Asia and the Far East is around \$110 while it is \$130 in Europe.

Canada leads the world in potash production and exports.

The Arab Potash Company has already signed contracts

to supply 600,000 tonnes in 1995. The deals need to be finalised with definite prices, the officials said.

"We are seeing a significant improvement in the international market for potash since mid-1994, and we expect prices to continue to go up in 1995," said a senior official of the company.

The official said the company expected an increase of \$4 per tonne in the first half of 1995 and another \$4 per tonne in the second half, as the republics in ex-Soviet Union cut back on their production.

Dumping by producers in some of the ex-Soviet republics in the transition from a single entity to individual countries — with experienced market strategists making way to politicians — was widely blamed for the stagnation in prices that the interna-

tional potash market witnessed in 1992-93.

Reports say that producers in the republics have now realised that they suffered heavy losses from haphazard exports and have cut down on production as they ponder new marketing strategies.

The APC floated a fresh issue in 1994 and raised its capital to JD 83.31 million from JD 72.45 million and used about JD 35 million it collected in premiums to finance its expansion projects.

The government of Jordan is the majority shareholder in the company. Other equity owners include the Social Security Corporation, the Arab Mining Company and the governments of Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Libya and the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank as well as the private sector.

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The conference followed several similar meetings between the GCC and the West.

But such meetings have produced no concrete results as Western investors seem not to want to commit themselves to major projects in the area because of its limited market potential.

No official figures are available on Western investments in the GCC but those by Japan are estimated at around \$3.5 billion, a fraction of its worldwide assets of nearly \$386 billion.

Foreign investors have also complained about restrictions on ownership of projects in GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE. Despite their liberal economic policies, the six states still stipulate foreign investors must have at least 49 per cent local partnership.

"There are \$170 billion in liquidity inside the GCC countries. But these countries do not know how to invest such funds," Mr. Harithi said. "They need technology and need to think well in order to invest their own funds instead of seeking Japanese or American liquidity."

He said Japanese investors appeared to prefer neighbouring China, South Korea, Thailand and Malaysia while Europe and the United States

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JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET									
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JERUSALEM									
TELEPHONE: 660170 / 663170									
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 14/01/1995									
	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	INDEX NUMBER	CHANGE	INDEX NUMBER	CHANGE
ARAB BANK	240	40605	184.000	183.250	-0.750	139511	-0.637	139511	-0.637
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	5100	21953	4.310	4.200	-0.110	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	7054	21953	4.310	4.200	-0.110	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	2000	3020	1.600	1.530	-0.070	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
JORDAN EDIAT BANK	2000	5700	2.880	2.850	-0.030	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
JORDAN GULF BANK	2015	16857	8.310	8.300	-0.010	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	10750	9210	1.610	1.540	-0.070	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	7104	26191	3.700	3.680	-0.020	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
BEIT ELKAL SAVINGS INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	504	2205	4.410	4.410	0.000	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
ARAB BANK FOR INVESTMENT	1050	3312	3.140	3.140	0.000	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	33820	83948	2.490	2.450	-0.040	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
PRINCE ALFARAJ INVESTMENT BANK	562	2321	4.140	4.150	0.010	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
BANKS SECTOR	2850	4647	2.660	2.630	-0.030	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	2450	245265	100.100	100.100	0.000	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
HOLY LAND INSURANCE	250	625	2.500	2.500	0.000	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INSURANCE SECTOR	2700	6603	2.450	2.450	0.000	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	3950	6044	1.540	1.530	-0.010	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER / NEW	9500	14751	1.490	1.490	0.000	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
JORDAN HOTEL & TOURISM	1100	6818	6.500	6.200	-0.300	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	2400	7556	3.170	3.150	-0.020	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	600	1427	2.470	2.350	-0.120	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
JORDAN GULF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	750	915	1.260	1.250	-0.010	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMODORE HOTELS	5600	13480	2.420	2.400	-0.020	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	25300	82550	3.480	3.500	0.020	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
SERVICES SECTOR	49600	139511	2.800	2.790	-0.010	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	26323	77489	2.960	2.940	-0.020	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES	100	288	2.880	2.880	0.000	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
THE ARAB POTASH/NEW	500	900	1.800	1.800	0.000	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
ARAB POTASH	350	1488	4.300	4.250	-0.050	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
JORDAN NATIONAL PETROLEUM REFINING	1716	13128	7.750	7.650	-0.100	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINING	3250	12035	5.380	5.340	-0.040	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	1000	625	6.300	6.250	-0.050	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	1000	2728	2.720	2.720	0.000	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	746	12190	16.450	16.200	-0.250	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	10250	10375	1.030	1.010	-0.020	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	169921	152395	1.930	1.880	-0.050	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	4000	5600	1.400	1.400	0.000	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	800	3312	4.240	4.140	-0.100	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	400	1104	2.820	2.760	-0.060	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	1350	1350	1.000	1.000	0.000	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	10850	8709	8.20	8.00	-0.20	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	350	1805	5.350	5.100	-0.250	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	503	1360	2.760	2.720	-0.040	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	4300	7731	1.740	1.800	0.060	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	900	3766	4.380	4.200	-0.180	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	10700	22448	2.150	2.080	-0.070	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	246496	343368	1.400	1.390	-0.010	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING	394821	738746	1.860	1.840	-0.020	34368	-0.917	34368	-0.917
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Cowboys, 49ers face NFL showdown

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) — American football's two title favourites meet here Sunday with reigning champion Dallas trying to secure a place in history and San Francisco seeking their moment in the spotlight.

The 49ers and Cowboys meet in a National Football League (NFL) semi-final, with the winner playing San Diego or Pittsburgh in the Super Bowl on January 29 in Miami. Dallas seeks an unprecedented third straight Super Bowl victory.

"We are at a crossroads in history where we could become the NFL's greatest team," Dallas owner Jerry Jones said.

The 49ers beat Dallas 21-14 last November in the regular season, helping them secure home-field advantage for this playoff game. A Dallas loss would be devastating to new coach Barry Switzer, who replaced Jimmy Johnson this season.

"It would be very disappointing," he said. "It would hurt. We would have lost our golden purpose."

"We have got to win," said Dallas receiver Michael Irvin. "It's not something you want to look back at 10 years from now wishing you had done."

Dallas rusher Emmitt Smith, slowed by a strained left hamstring, is expected to play. Rains in California the past week could produce poor field conditions, but Smith is not worried.

"I'm a pretty good mudder," he said. "I'll be out there." Quarterbacks Troy Aikman of Dallas and Steve Young of San Francisco will each be tested by one of the league's top defenses. But the best head-to-head matchup will be Irvin and Alvin Harper against 49ers defender Deion Sanders.

"I like it when the challenge is great," Irvin said. "Usually, when the challenge is great, the whole world is watching."

Teams have simply avoided throwing against Sanders, who has seven interceptions this season. But his backfield teammate has picked off eight and will handle whichever Dallas threat Sanders is not guarding.



Emmitt Smith, the Dallas Cowboys' star running back, at practice

Olympic Games qualifying starts in Africa

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — The qualifying competition to determine which three countries represent Africa at the 1996 Olympic Games football finals in the United States begins Sunday.

Burundi play Djibouti in Bujumbura, Lesotho tackle Namibia in Maseru and Burkina Faso meet Guinea Bissau in Ouagadougou in preliminary-round, first-leg fixtures.

The return matches are scheduled for the weekend of January 27-29 with the overall winners going forward to the first-round proper in April.

South Africa await Burundi or Djibouti, Cameroon have been paired with Lesotho or Namibia and Tunisia will confront Burkina Faso or Guinea Bissau.

None of the six countries in action this weekend are likely qualifiers for the 16-nation finals, scheduled for five American cities — Athens, Birmingham, Miami, Orlando and Washington.

But it will be a special day for the contenders as they compete for the first time in the Olympics, which ranks second only to the World in universal football importance.

World governing body FIFA are so concerned the Olympics could upstage their premier event they have restricted the qualifying rounds to players aged under 23.

In the finals, teams can field three players over the age limit, a move that has been criticised in Europe as a backward step in the development of rising stars.

Burundi are favoured to build a winning lead over Djibouti, a tiny former French colony situated at the horn of Africa, which was admitted to FIFA only last June.

A club from Burundi reached the African Cup-winners' Cup final two years ago and the youth side defeated Malawi and Egypt to reach the African finals, which begin January 24.

Lesotho could draw heavily on the squad that gave South Africa a fright in the youth championship while Namibia have a sound youth development programme.

Burkina Faso, should prove too strong at home for Guinea Bissau.

Romario completes transfer to Flamengo

BARCELONA (AFP) — Romario announced Friday he had finally signed for Flamengo after difficult and lengthy negotiations with Barcelona club officials, his agent and Flamengo president Kleber Leite.

And according to Barcelona's vice-president Joan Gaspart, the Catalan club received 600 million pesetas (about 4.5 million) in the form of a bank guarantee which was meticulously examined by Barcelona accountants.

The 28-year-old Brazilian World Cup star, who had played at Barcelona for a season and a half, leaves for Rio on Saturday morning.

Romario, who has signed a two-year contract with the

Rio club, said at a press conference: "I am not leaving Barcelona for professional reasons, but because I think the moment has come for me to return to my country and join up with my house and friends."

"Nevertheless, I would like to express my gratitude to supporters, players, coaches and directors of Barcelona."

Barcelona are set to gain should Romario ever again play outside Brazil.

Romario would have to pay between 600 and 900 million pesetas (between \$4.5 and 7 million) to Barcelona, depending on which country and continent he moved to.

And if Flamengo wanted Barcelona to relinquish this right, they would have to pay

an extra 600 million pesetas, Gaspart added.

Romario said he was leaving with a clear mind and on good terms with Barcelona.

"I arrived at Barcelona at a very difficult time in my career and the players totally accepted me. I have tried to give my best," he added.

Cruyff, who on Friday extended his coaching contract till July 1997, has been unsettled by Romario this season.

He turned up more than three weeks late at the beginning of the season, and his form has been poor — far from the performances which earned him 30 goals in 1993/94.

And Romario officially announced his definite intention to leave Barcelona last

Thursday — just two days before their crucial clash with Real Madrid, which they went on to lose 5-0.

Romario, who described Cruyff as the best coach in the world, said he had "a year and a half of happiness at Barcelona."

"If I wish to return to Europe, I would hope the doors of Barcelona would open again for me."

The announcement of Romario's return was welcomed with delight in Rio, as cars motored round the city draped in Flamengo's red and black colours.

Further celebrations will include a trip across the city by the gifted striker in a type of "Popemobile," or open-topped vehicle.

Panathinaikos, Napoli given stadium bans

GENEVA (R) — Italy's Napoli and Panathinaikos of Greece were ordered by UEFA Friday to play their next home European match in an empty stadium.

The control and disciplinary committee of European soccer's governing body reached their decision after studying incidents of crowd disorder involving both clubs earlier this season.

Napoli were punished because their supporters threw missiles, including bottles and stones, on to the pitch during their UEFA Cup tie against Eintracht Frankfurt on December 7.

Trouble also flared when Panathinaikos played club Brugge of Belgium in a European Cup Winners' Cup match in November. The Greek club's fans behaved in an unsportsmanlike fashion, according to the committee.

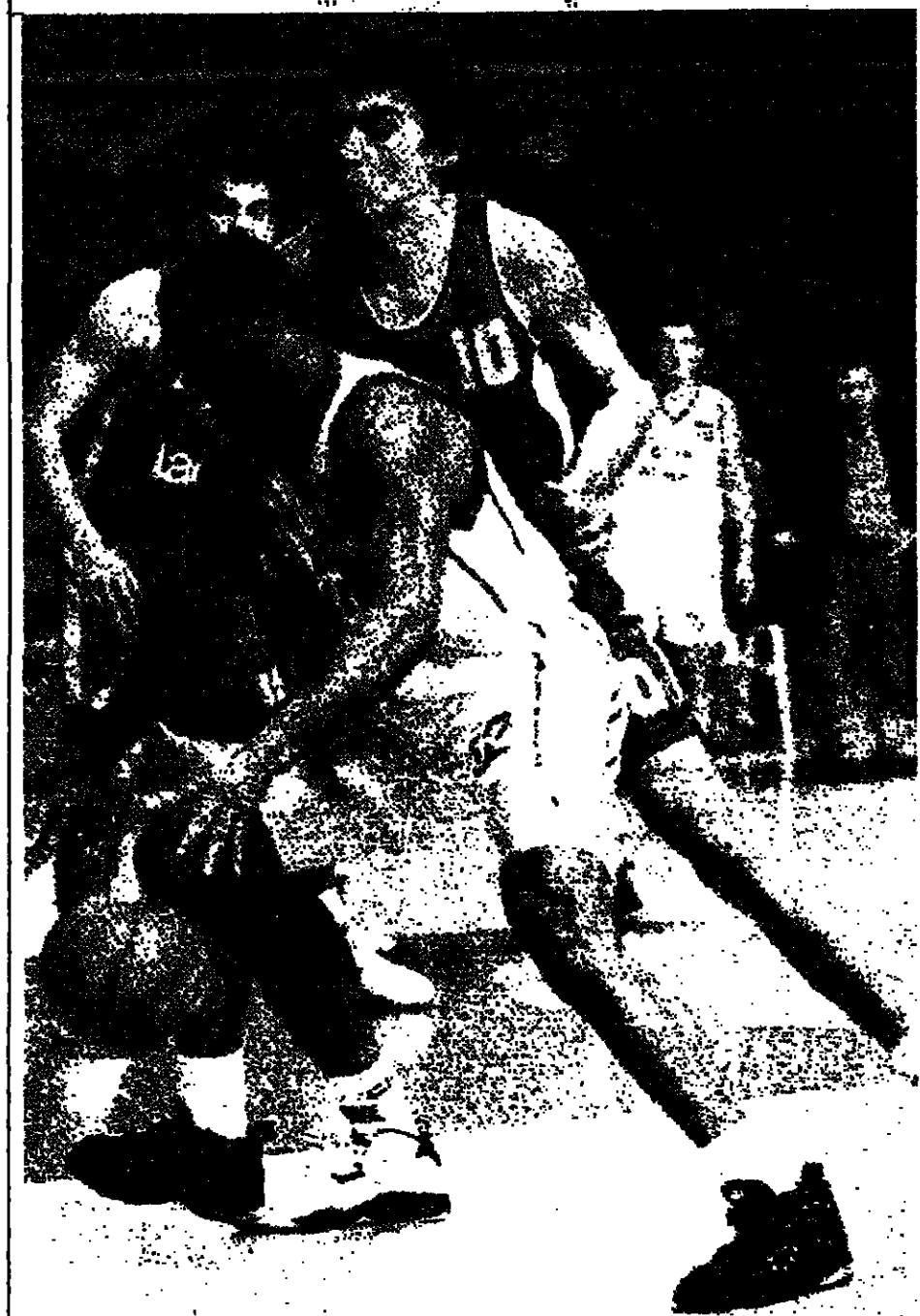
Panathinaikos were also fined 35,000 Swiss francs (\$22,750) and Brugge 40,000 francs (\$26,000) respectively because of on-field incidents involving their players.

One of them, Athanasios Kolitsidakis, was banned for three matches.

Macedonia were ordered to play their next two European Championship qualifying ties in an empty stadium as punishment for their fans setting off fireworks while celebrating victory over Cyprus last month. A Cypriot delegation official was injured.

Italian champions AC Milan were fined 20,000 francs (\$13,000) because their fans set off fireworks in the Champions' League tie against Ajax Amsterdam November 23.

Casino Salzburg coach Otto Baric was banned from the touchline from all UEFA club competition matches until the end of the year for his "undisciplined conduct" during the Champions' League tie against AC Milan December 7.



Efes Pilsen's Reggie cross #12 and Olympiakos' Panagiotis Fassoulas #10 in action during the European Champions basketball match between Greece's Olympiakos of Piraeus and Efes Pilsen of Istanbul. Efes won 79-56 (AFP photo)

Intercontinental Cup Denmark subdue Argentina to win title

RIYADH (AFP) — Denmark added the Intercontinental Cup to their European title after refusing to be subdued by intimidation in a 2-0 win over 10-man Argentina here Friday.

Michael Laudrup and Peter Rasmussen settled a match in which bolders Argentina used unrestrained aggression rather than football finesse.

Defender Jose Chamot could have been sent off in the first half. But referee Ali Abou Jassim of the United Arab Emirates eventually sent him off in the dying seconds.

Roberto Ayala could also have been dismissed for another cynical foul as Argentina used bullying tactics — particularly against Brian Laudrup — throughout the showpiece final.

Michael Laudrup's early penalty enlivened the match after a clear foul on Jes Hogn. Hogn, looking dangerous on the right side of Argentina's area, was upended by Roberto Ayala.

Ayala had tried to pull back his right leg, but his reactions were too slow, and defender Hogn, playing his 11th international, was left sprawling.

Michael Laudrup went off injured after 27 minutes, surely pleasing Jorge Valdano, coach of Real Madrid who play an important match against Deportivo La Coruna at the weekend.

Almost immediately after the substitution, Argentina continued their over physical play as Alejandro Escudero backed down Denmark's Brian Laudrup.

And 10 minutes later, Chamot was lucky to stay on the field as Brian Laudrup was yet again brought down, this time on the edge of the box.

Just before the break, Ayala, already booked, was also saved from dismissal by the referee's lenience as he appeared to elbow Brian Laudrup in the face.

Peter Rasmussen missed with a header just after the break, but atoned for that with a 74th minute goal, set up by Brian Laudrup, to seal Denmark's 1.5-million-dollar winners' check.

Mexico overcome Nigeria

Meanwhile Mexico put their penalty nightmares behind them when they beat Nigeria 5-4 in a shoot-out for third place in the Intercontinental Cup.

Mexico had lost 4-2 on

penalties to Denmark in the semi-finals here this week and were knocked out of last year's World Cup finals on penalties by Bulgaria in the second round.

But with the scores level at 1-1 after 90 minutes — the Mexicans were soon celebrating a decisive save by flamboyant goalkeeper Jorge Campos against Emmanuel Amunike.

Nigeria's misery was compounded by having had a goal disallowed in injury time.

Earlier, Roman Ramirez put Mexico 4-0 up before Daniel Amokachi, who scored against Japan, banged in an equaliser for the Super Eagles.

Both sides had made a bright start, with Austin Okocha's long shot forcing an awkward save from Campos.

Minutes later, Carlos Hermosillo was just inches away from connecting at close range with Luis Garcia's looping cross from the left.

Ramirez finally broke the deadlock on 20 minutes, after a goalkeeping blunder by Peter Rufai.

The Nigerian's half-hearted punched clearance from a free kick found Ramirez unmarked inside the area and the waist-high shot came bouncing back just beyond Rufai's grasp.

However, barely 10 minutes later, a goalkeeping error at the other end brought Nigeria back into the match.

Kenya government asked to mediate in athletes dispute

NAIROBI (R) — Kenya's track and field chief Isaiah Kiplagat called on the government Friday to mediate in a dispute which could lead to the banning of athletes who take part in unauthorised meetings.

The row erupted earlier this week when Kiplagat, chairman of the Kenya Amateur Athletics Association (KAAA), threatened severe punishments for anyone taking part in three events sponsored by an Italian sports equipment company during the next four weeks.

He said then it was illegal for athletes and sponsors to organise any meetings without the authority of a national governing body and anyone taking part would be banned.

But on Friday Kiplagat called on the government to intervene in the affair.

"We request the ministry of culture and social services (which includes sports) to intervene and let us know their stand," Kiplagat said in a statement.

Middle distance stars Nixon Kiprotich, Sammy Koskei and Peter Rono and distance runner Moses Tanui are among local organisers of three events.

Athletes have said they would ignore the KAAA threat.

NBA Results and Standings

WASHINGTON (AFP) — NBA results and standings after Friday's games:

New Jersey 110, Philadelphia 101
Indiana 113, Washington 99
Orlando 101, Atlanta 96
Utah 95, Boston 93
Minnesota 104, Detroit 92
Sacramento 89, Chicago 79
New York 91, Milwaukee 88
Houston 103, San Antonio 100
Seattle 108, L.A. Clippers 101
L.A. Lakers 115, Golden State 104

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Orlando	28	7	.800	—
New York	28	12	.692	6½
Boston	24	20	.545	13½
New Jersey	14	23	.378	15
Minnesota	10	23	.303	17
Philadelphia	10	23	.303	17
Washington	7	26	.212	20

Central Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Cleveland	22	11	.667	—
Charlotte	21	12	.636	1
Indiana	20	13	.606	2
Chicago	18	16	.529	4½
Atlanta	15	20	.429	8
Milwaukee	11	23	.324	11½
Detroit	10	23	.303	11½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Utah	24	10	.706	—
Houston	22	10	.688	1
San Antonio	20	11	.645	2½
Denver	17	16	.515	6½
Dallas	15	16	.484	7½
Minnesota	7	26	.212	16½

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Phoenix	26	8	.765	—
Seattle	23	9	.719	2
L.A. Lakers	21	11	.656	4
Sacramento	19	14	.576	6½
Portland	18	14	.563	7
Golden State	10	22	.313	15
L.A. Clippers	5	29	.147	21

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
AND TAMARA HUSCH
Feature Movie Adapted

THE EXPERT'S NIGHTMARE

Both vulnerable. South deals.
NORTH
♠ A J 10 3
♥ A J 5
♦ 9 8 5 2
♣ 8 3

WEST
♠ Q 5 5
♥ 9 7 4 2
♦ Q 8
♣ A J 10 9 5

EAST
♠ 7 4
♥ 10 8 3
♦ K J 10 4
♣ 8 7 4 2

SOUTH
♠ K 9 8 2
♥ K Q 6
♦ A 7 5
♣ A K Q

The bidding:
South West North East
2NT Pass 3♦ Pass
3♦ Pass 5♦ Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♠.
We have often heard people remark how easy the game of bridge

must be for the expert. Nothing could be further from the truth. To illustrate, consider this seemingly simple hand.

The bidding is typical of the optimism of many of today's players. North wasn't sure how to describe the holding once a spade fit was discovered, an elected-to-jump over game. As a result, South had to declare in the no-man's land of bridge—the five-level.

When dummy came down it was obvious that limiting the diamond and spade losses to a total of two was all that was required. To the average player, that's no problem. The spade finesse is taken one way or the other and the outcome seals the fate of the contract.

The expert will always consider other lines. One way is to cash the ace of diamonds early, hoping someone with a doubtful king doesn't unblock. Then the ace and king of

spades and all the winners are cashed, and declarer hopes that a diamond or trump exit employs one of the defenders. This effort flops on a wing and a prayer.

Rather better is to win the opening lead and duck a diamond immediately. Declarer can win any return, cash the ace and king of trumps and all the outside winners, including the ace of diamonds, then exit with a trump and hope for a similar end-play. That works with any doubtless diamond in the hand with three trumps and is how the hand was played at the table.

The trouble is that neither of these lines succeeds when trumps are 4-1, and there are several other hurdles along the way. In the final analysis, we think the expert should try to guess the location of the queen of spades immediately, despite an inherent abhorrence to risk so much so soon on a finesse.

Cinema	Tel.: 634144	Cinema	Tel.: 699238	Cinema	Tel.: 677420	Tel.: 618274 - 618275	Tel.: 675571	Nabil & Hisham's Tel.: 625155
PHILADELPHIA		PLAZA		CONCORD		AMMOUN THEATRE	Nabil Al Mashini Theatre	AHLAN THEATRE
Jim Carrey in THE MASK Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		Julia Roberts/Nick Nolte in I Love Trouble Shows: 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 The Lion King Shows: 10:30, 12:30, 3:30, 5:00		CONCORD "1" Sylvester Stallone - Sharon Stone in THE SPECIALIST Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD "2" Harrison Ford - Whitney Houston — THE BODYGUARD Shows: 3, 5		SUM'A In the satirical play HI CITIZEN Composed and directed by Mohammad Al Shawaqfeh Daily from 8:30 p.m. Children's Play The Ninja Turtles Show Directed by Akram Abul Ragheb Daily at 3:30 p.m.	Presents Abu Awwad In the social comedy Punctured Bag The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day	Presents: AL SALAM YA SALAM The political satire: at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 in English Sunday January 15, 1995

Algiers seen cool to opposition's proposal

ALGIERS (Agencies) — The offer made by Algeria's main opposition groups for talks with the military-backed government brings no new elements to the country's ongoing crisis, according to initial media reaction Saturday to the proposal.

The government by mid-day Saturday had not issued a statement in reaction to the proposal made, the previous day in Rome but the official news agency APS said the accord "overall reiterates the demands of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS)."

In a statement described as a "national contract," the religious and secular Algerian opposition, including the FIS, called Friday for a national conference to be held as soon as possible to pave the way for free democratic elections.

The initiative was the first time opposition groups had agreed on a common stand to end the country's crisis triggered by the government's decision three years ago to cancel the second round of general elections which the FIS was poised to win.

In Washington, the State Department issued a statement saying that the accord was a "significant event" and was reached by groups representing some 80 per cent of Algerians who voted in the contested 1991 election.

It "appears to be a serious effort to contribute to the establishment of a process that could lead to a non-violent solution to the Algerian crisis," the department added.

But APS said the Rome declaration was similar to a government offer last year for talks with several FIS leaders.

Most newspapers here Saturday also appeared indifferent to the declaration saying it represented FIS demands and brought no new elements.

"The miracle expected in Rome never occurred," said the independent daily Al Watan in a front-page editorial. It added that the Rome meeting, sponsored by the Sant' Egidio Community, a Roman Catholic peace group, "would have brought nothing new towards restoring peace."

Another independent daily, Liberte, said the Rome resolution only reflected the FIS demands.

"It does not condemn terrorism and makes no allusion to a truce or an end to the bloodbath," it said.

It added that the resolution was more a "diktat" than an offer for future negotiations and said the government was unlikely to respond positively.

The daily Le Matin said the Rome declaration amounted to "endorsing fundamentalist terrorism" and marked a victory for the FIS which did not have to drop any of its demands and could now "negotiate from a position of power with the government."

"One is hardpressed to see what kind of parade the government can put on in answer to what has just happened in Rome, other than organise these suspicious demonstrations," the paper said, referring to various so-called "spontaneous" pro-government marches often organised throughout the country.

The daily Al Umma, close to the fundamentalists, said the accord reached in Rome represented an "important

step made by a strong opposition toward the government.

"The ball is now in the government's court," the paper said. "It is now necessary to extend a hand and try to use this year to resolve this crisis."

Suspected Muslim guerrillas abducted and killed an Algerian journalist working for the government-controlled newspaper Al Shaab, the paper said on Saturday.

Abdul Hamid Yahiaoui, 33, was seized on Thursday as he was leaving his home in the Algiers suburb of Baraki to meet a friend, Al Shaab said.

His body was found the next day with two bullets in the head about 100 metres from his home.

The newspaper said that the day before his abduction, Yahiaoui had discussed with colleagues the risk of being killed and had said he hoped "to die without suffering."

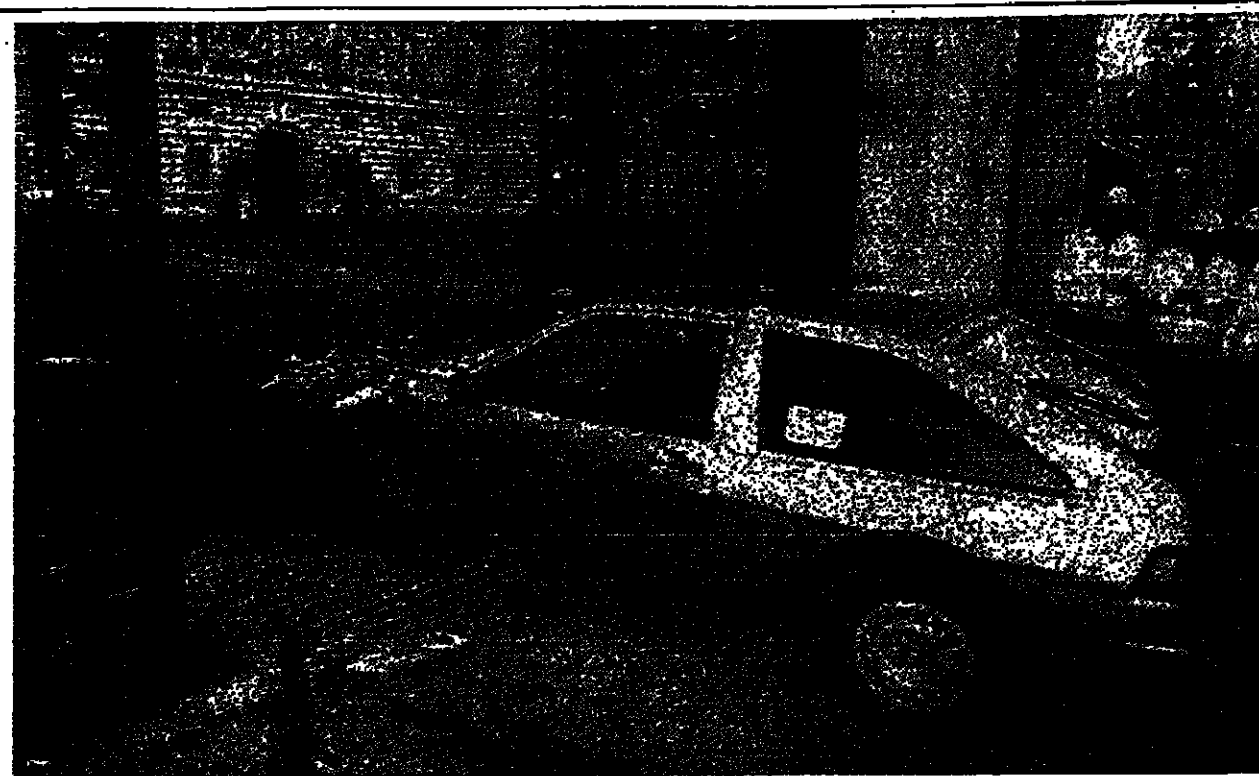
He was the third journalist to be killed in Algeria this month, and at least the 30th to die since June 1993, according to the French organisation Reporters Sans Frontiers (Reporters Without Borders).

The Paris-based press freedom watchdog group said it wrote to Algerian President Liamine Zerroul demanding that the government take adequate steps to protect journalists.

Algerian police have arrested the Algiers freelance correspondent of Italy's ANSA news agency and two of his children, ANSA said.

It said Algerian reporter Mohammed Zaaf, 49, and his two children were arrested

(Continued on page 3)



CRASH AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE: The scene early Friday outside the main gates of Buckingham Palace, the official residence of the British royal family, where a private vehicle crashed, bringing down one of the gates. The driver

of the Volkswagen Scirocco, a man in his 20s, was being interviewed by police and the cause of the collision is not immediately clear (AFP photo)

Shiite areas of Bahrain tense

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Shiite Muslim areas of Bahrain were tense Saturday after security forces arrested 48 people in clashes at the funeral of a demonstrator, the country's exiled Islamic opposition said.

The 48 people were from the mainly Shiite village of Diraz, where Abdul Kader Mohsen Al Fadawi died Thursday in a clash with police, the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain (IFLB) said.

The IFLB, in a statement received in Cyprus, said police made the arrests "when they attacked the 3,000 people attending Fatawi's funeral."

Diplomats and witnesses said Thursday's clashes lasted all night in Diraz, Beni Jannah, Abu Sibaa, Barbar, Jidhafs and Sanabes — Shiite communities northwest of Manama.

It was the worst violence since protests broke out in the emirate in mid-December after the arrest of a prominent Shiite cleric, Sheikh Ali Salman, on Dec. 5, the sources said.

The IFLB said Saturday that the trouble had spread to Manama as well as Noudrat, another Shiite community to the west.

The Ahrar liberal opposition movement based in London reported several wounded in clashes on Thursday and Friday. Tension was high in Shiite villages on Saturday.

Meanwhile, the emir, Sheikh Issa Ben Salman Al Khalifa, met Joseph Hoar and Richard Murphy, both members of the U.S. Foreign Relations Council, the official Bahraini news agency GNA said.

The meeting was also attended by Prime Minister Khalifa Ben Salman Al Khalifa, Foreign Minister Mohammad Ben Mubarak Al Khalifa and Interior Minister Mohammad Ben Khalifa Al Khalifa.

Demonstrators on Thursday called for the return of parliamentary democracy and for political reforms, as well as the release of prisoners, the witnesses and diplomats contacted by telephone said.

Iraq says 5,000 dead in one province because of sanctions

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — More than 5,000 people died in a single province of Iraq last year because of a shortage of medicine and food caused by U.N. sanctions, the official news agency INA said Saturday.

It said 339 infants and 192 children under the age of five were among the 5,093 who died in the southern province of Dhi Qar.

In October, Health Minister Umid Mubarak said the situation was deteriorating by the day. The infant mortality rate had risen from 12 per 1,000 in 1989 to as many as 148 per 1,000 in 1994.

The U.N. Security Council on Thursday renewed for another two months the crippling embargo in force against Iraq since its August 1990 invasion of neighbouring Kuwait.

Food and medicine are exempted from the sanctions. But Baghdad says it does not have enough funds to import the country's needs because of the embargo on oil exports, its economic lifeline.

An Iraqi daily launched a scathing attack Saturday on the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, saying her

"lies" and U.S. "theft" were to blame for the renewal of the U.N. sanctions.

"Mad Albright is insolent and a liar," the official newspaper Al Jumhuriya said of Ambassador Madeleine Albright, who has charged that Iraq still had to return military and civilian equipment stolen during its invasion of Kuwait.

"Theft is the specialty of senior U.S. officials who proclaim in public that the Gulf region is a vital zone for their interests," the paper charged.

"It is the United States which robs the world today and resorts to aggression," Al Jumhuriya said.

After a closed door meeting, Security Council President Emilio Cardenas of Argentina said Thursday that "the council has completed the 23rd exam of sanctions against Iraq... there has been no change in the situation whatsoever."

"It has been determined that the situation has not changed in a way that would make it credible or possible to change the sanctions regime," Ambassador Albright said. "I think that what is

important in the council is that all members did agree that it's very important for Iraq to live up to the Security Council resolutions and the commitments it has made."

British team to Iraq

A delegation of British industrialists is to visit Iraq in February despite the sanctions on trade with the country, the Financial Times reported on Friday.

The newspaper said the delegation, which would be in Iraq on Feb. 15, was being organised by a commercial lobby group called the Iraqi-British Interests Group, and that it would be going "with government backing."

However, a Department of Trade official said Britain had not relaxed the strict un-agreed rules governing business contacts with Iraq that have been in force since the Gulf war.

Companies can supply only "humanitarian items" to Iraq, such as medical supplies and basic foodstuffs, she said. Even then, the companies need a special licence from the government.

(Continued on page 3)

Sri Lankan talks hit snags

JAFFNA (Agencies) — The Sri Lankan government and Tamil rebels failed to make headway on a political package, as peace talks appeared stalled after a third round Saturday in this northern rebel stronghold.

The leader of the government delegation, Kusumiri Balapatabendi, said the two sides failed to agree on a date to start substantive political negotiations but decided to extend the current cessation of hostilities.

Government negotiators also announced that Colombo had decided to lift 20 more items off a list of goods banned from northern areas controlled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

President Chandrika Kumaratunga partially lifted the economic embargo after leading her People's Alliance to victory at the August parliamentary elections in a bid to speed up the peace process.

In August the government removed almost half the items from a list of nearly 50 banned goods before opening

negotiations with the LTTE aimed at resolving the island's long-running ethnic conflict in the northeast.

Among the items that were removed at that time were all medicines, food, sanitary napkins and kerosene oil. The latest list of items to be exempted from the ban includes printing machines, toys and electrical wire.

However, the government was still undecided on whether to lift five other items including remote control devices, binoculars, telescopes and compasses, defence sources said. The embargo on fuel will remain.

After five hours of talks, Ms. Balapatabendi told reporters here that the discussions were "satisfactory but I would not say fully satisfactory. I expected other things to come out of the talks."

Shortly after returning to Colombo, Ms. Balapatabendi acknowledged that the latest round of talks had not produced the same amount of success as the previous two rounds but rejected suggestions that talks were deadlocked.

"It is not deadlocked. Things have not been finalized. There is acceptance on both sides on the issues," Ms. Balapatabendi told reporters in the Sri Lankan capital after arriving from Jaffna.

However, the negotiators agreed to continue their current truce, journalists said.

The journalists, who accompanied the government team to Jaffna, said government and rebel spokesmen had told them the two-week ceasefire would continue after Jan. 22, when it was due to come under review.

Government negotiators said they wanted to start peace talks next month.

Chief rebel negotiator Tamil Chelvaam said talks could only commence when an important land route to the war-ravaged north had been opened and an economic embargo against the region lifted.

"Negotiations on the political package will begin once the land route is open and the economic embargo is lifted," said Mr. Chelvaam, head of the political section LTTE.

Thursday, "does not reflect Israel's policy or any of the foreign ministry's positions."

But relations between Israel and Egypt, which in 1979 became the first Arab country to make peace with the Jewish state, have cooled considerably over the month. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Wednesday criticized Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's call for his country to prepare for war in the long term.

Egypt has threatened not to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty if Israel refuses to join when it comes up for renewal.

Mr. Mubarak also hosted a mini-Arab summit last month when he, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad urged Arab countries to slow the rush to set up ties with Israel.

COLUMN 8

Human chain saves paintings from fire

PONTARLIER, France (AFP) — Volunteers formed a human chain to save paintings, including some by 19th century master Gustave Courbet, from a fire in a museum, officials said Friday. Some 95 per cent of the works at the museum in Pontarlier, eastern France, were saved after volunteers came to the rescue Thursday evening, a town hall official said.

Diana's friends ordered to give evidence

LONDON (AFP) — Lawyers are ordering friends of Princess Diana to give evidence in a law suit over secretly shot photographs of her exercising in a London gym, Independent Television News (ITN) said Friday. The pictures, allegedly taken without the princess' knowledge, were sold to Mirror Group Newspapers by the gym-owner Bryce Taylor. They were subsequently published. It is his lawyers who are calling the Princess of Wales friends as witnesses, said ITN. The princess, estranged wife of Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales, heir to the British throne, is suing both the Mirror Group and the gym owner for invasion of privacy. The case, scheduled to start in a month's time is expected to hinge on whether or not she knew the pictures were being taken.

Man committed after plunging car into palace gate

LONDON (AFP) — A 21-year-old student was committed for psychiatric observation after crashing his car into the outer gates of Queen Elizabeth II's London residence, Buckingham Palace, police said. The queen and other royal family members were away when the car rammed the huge, ornate metal gates at 4:30 a.m., sending one of them crashing down on its roof and rousing palace guards and staff. The driver was not identified, and a Scotland Yard spokesman said there appeared to have been no malice intended. The man was interviewed later in the day by psychiatrists at a nearby police station and was then "sectioned" to a psychiatric unit under the Mental Health Act, said the police spokesman. He said no criminal charges were lodged, adding: "This is not a normal thing that you would expect a sane person to do."

Vatican sacks outspoken bishop

VATICAN CITY (R) — The Vatican said Friday it had removed a leading liberal French bishop from his post because of his unacceptable behaviour and his public stance on certain issues. The rare sanction was taken after Monsignor Jacques Gaillot, Bishop of Evreux in Normandy since 1982, and dubbed "the red cleric" upon the Roman Catholic hierarchy with his orthodox views on issues ranging from AIDS to workers' rights. A Vatican statement said the 59-year-old bishop had aroused "anxiety and negative reactions" through his "behaviour, positions and frequent trips outside the diocese." It said Bishop Gaillot, who often aired his views in the media, refused to heed advice and warnings about his methods. "Unfortunately, the bishop did not show himself to be ideal to carry out a ministry of unity which is the first task of any bishop," the Vatican said. Some senior French clerics said his sacking was "inevitable because of long-standing disagreement with his hierarchy." The secretary of the bishop's conference, Jean-Michel Di Falco, said it would leave wounds that would take time to heal. "This is painful not only for himself but for a very large number of faithful who were very close to him," he said. "It is a sad day for the diocese." The popular French priest who campaigns for the rights of the homeless. "Our society will increasingly need men like Jacques Gaillot: Straight, just and honest," Evreux's Communist Mayor Roland Plaisance said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Yemeni president to visit France

SANAA (R) — Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh will start a three-day visit to France on Sunday as part of a European tour likely also to include the Netherlands and Germany, official sources said on Saturday. It will be Mr. Saleh's first visit to France since a two-month civil war last year in which his forces defeated southern separatists. During the war, Paris expressed support for Yemen's unity and Mr. Saleh "will express his country's appreciation and gratitude for the French stand," one source said. Mr. Saleh would also discuss economic cooperation with France. Yemeni businessmen and investors will accompany Mr. Saleh to explore prospects of cooperation both in the public and private sectors, the sources said.

Israel would have hit back at Iraq

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel would have hit back at Iraq if it had launched an unconventional attack on the Jewish state during the 1991 Gulf war, former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Saturday. "If we had been attacked with unconventional weapons, we would have been forced to react militarily," Mr. Shamir told Israel radio ahead of the fourth anniversary of the war to free Kuwait from Iraqi occupation. Two people died and hundreds were wounded when Iraq hit Israel with 39 Scud missiles in the January 17-Feb. 28 war, but Israel did not retaliate to avoid undermining the anti-Iraq coalition which included Arab states. "In the event of an unconventional Iraqi attack, our problem was to know when to act, without the agreement of the allies if necessary, which would have posed serious problems of coordination because we had to make sure we would not cause American casualties," Mr. Shamir said.

Fundamentalists condemned at Turk's funeral

ISTANBUL (R) — Thousands of Turks condemned Islamic fundamentalists on Saturday at the funeral of a prominent Turkish writer, who died in a bomb explosion. Onat Kutlar, 59, died this week of wounds sustained from the explosion in a central Istanbul hotel on Dec. 30. An outlawed Islamic group, the Great Eastern Islamic Raiders — front (IBDA-C), claimed responsibility for the blast, which also killed a tour guide and wounded another man. Kutlar, a poet and film critic, wrote in Cumhuriyet daily, a leading advocate of secularism in predominantly Muslim Turkey. Some 5,000 mourners, who gathered in the courtyard of Cumhuriyet editorial headquarters in Babiali district early in the morning, marched towards the Tesviye Mosque where a religious ceremony was held. The mourners shouted anti-militant slogans that included "Turkey will not be another Iran," "Turkey is secular and will remain secular" and "Mullahs to Iran." Kutlar's body was later buried in an Istanbul cemetery.

Sudan leader fires two officials

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudanese leader Lieutenant General Omar Hassan Al Bashir sacked on Saturday two southern Sudan officials for financial irregularities involving public funds. State Radio Omdurman said Thomas Kume, governor of unity state in southern Sudan, and his Finance Minister David Wal were dismissed over irregularities involving about 60 million Sudanese pounds (\$143,000). In a separate development, the radio reported Gen. Bashir swore in the heads of the internal and external security organs. It said Hassan Osman Dhahawi, a veteran security officer, had been appointed chief of internal security while Nafie Ali Nafie, a civilian state minister in the president's office, had been named head of the external security organ.

Canadian minister to visit Mideast

OTTAWA (AFP) — Foreign Minister Andre Ouellet will visit Lebanon and Kuwait between Jan. 25 and 28 and will re-open Canada's embassy in Beirut, his office said Friday. Mr. Ouellet will meet with visiting delegations of Canadian businessmen during the trip hoping to boost trade and investment ties with the region. In a statement, Mr. Ouellet said: "The reopening of our Beirut embassy marks a turning point in our relations with Lebanon. It will enable Canada to strengthen its political and economic ties with this country and to play a more effective role in the reconstruction work currently under way there."

Geagea back on trial without defence

BEIRUT (AFP) — Lebanese Christian warlord Samir Geagea, who faces a possible death sentence on murder charges, went back on trial here Saturday without a defence team.

The lawyers of his two co-defendants, Rafik Saadeh and Camille Karam, also walked out in protest. "The attitude of the court, which is contrary to the law, sets a dangerous precedent," they said in a statement.

Mr. Geagea's last two court-appointed lawyers dropped out during a hearing on Friday.

The former militia chief, whose trial opened Nov. 19, is charged with murdering rival Christian leader Dany Chamoun and his family in 1990, and with the bombing of a church near Beirut in February 1994 that claimed 11 lives.

His lawyers Mahmud Mukhaish and Nazih Shalala retired because Mr. Geagea told the court they "harm his interests" by requesting a postponement of the hearings on the Chamoun case.

Mr. Mukhaish argued that the Chamoun charges were based upon information obtained during the church inquiry, and that the case should be put off until a verdict is reached on the church bombing.

Mr. Geagea, head of the Lebanese Forces militia in the last five years of the 1975-1990 civil war, requested that the hearings continue.

Lebanon Shiite leader issues 'Fatwa' on nuclear treaty

BEIRUT (Agencies) — The spiritual head of Lebanon's Shiite Muslims issued a "fatwa" (religious decree) barring Arab and Muslim states from signing the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) before Israel does so, the National News Agency said.

Sheikh Mohammad Mahdi Shamseddine announced the ban at Friday prayers, the agency said.

"I say to Iran and all the Arab and Muslim states that it is forbidden to sign the nuclear treaty until the enemy's nuclear weapon has been dismantled," Sheikh Shamseddine said.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty comes up for renewal in April but Arab countries spearheaded by Egypt are demanding that Israel sign if they are to sign it. Israel is

widely believed to hold nuclear weapons but refuses to subscribe to the treaty. Sheikh Shamseddine said Arab and Muslim countries must also have a role in monitoring Israel's compliance to the treaty.

"The conditions for peace are dismantling the enemy and forming an international observation team that includes Arabs and Muslims, and after that Arab and Muslim states will sign the treaty and participate in the international monitoring system," he said.

"There will be no signature of this treaty before those conditions are met," he added.

Sheikh Shamseddine heads Lebanon's mainstream Shiite community, the country's biggest religious group. He is the only religious leader in

the country to have spoken out on the nuclear non-proliferation issue so far. Lebanon has in the past signed the treaty but the government has not announced its stance on the renewal due in April.

Egypt-Israel row

Egypt on Saturday condemned as "mentally retarded" an Israeli foreign ministry study which called for harsh measures against Cairo for its latest policies towards the Jewish state.

"It is mentally retarded to say Israel will punish Egypt," Foreign Minister Amr Musa told reporters. "Thought of punishing Egypt smacks of naivety and a mentality that sends us back years."

The Israeli policy planning department study leaked to

the Haaretz newspaper said: "If Egypt continues its negative policies, Israel should take harsh retaliatory measures."

It recommended that Israel persuade the United States to reduce aid, suspend regular political meetings during which Cairo is briefed on the peace process and take negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) out of Egypt.

But Mr. Musa said talk of "punishment" was "unacceptable and unrealistic" and the Israeli officials responsible for the document should "reconsider these suggestions."

He considered the matter "closed" and pointed to remarks by Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

Mr. Peres said the study, published in Haaretz on